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BRITISH FOREIGN POLICY

By J. M. Keynes

THE NEW

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The Week-end Review

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THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION—The Week-end Review. *Incorporating The New Statesman, The Nation and Athenaeum, Week-end Review.*

THE Report of the Royal Commission on Palestine is published as we go to press. It is a document of the first importance, which will have repercussions not only in the East, but in the West, and we must reserve till next week a fuller discussion of the matter contained in its 400 pages. Its main proposal is the partition of Palestine into three—an Arab State, a Jewish State, and an enclave, to be retained under British Mandate, comprising Jerusalem and the other Holy Places, and—temporarily—the " mixed " towns of Haifa, Acre and Tiberias. It cannot be, and it is not, pretended that this is an ideal solution of the problem. It is in fact an admission of defeat. The hope that under the Mandate the two peoples of Palestine might be welded into a single nation has been disappointed ; after nearly twenty years of effort and struggle the antagonism has hardened, apparently beyond the possibility of compromise. Neither Arabs nor Jews, in fact, are prepared to-day to accept any compromise that is tolerable to the other, and the unfortunate Mandatory Power is in the position of a policeman, hard put to it to keep a precarious peace, and attacked by both sides in turn for its partiality or its tyranny.

The Partition of Palestine

What in these circumstances is Great Britain to do? We could wash our hands of the whole business, relinquish the Mandate and leave Palestine to stew in its own juice—which would very soon be Mussolini's juice. Alternatively we can try the experiment of partition recommended by the Royal Commission, and this the British Government has decided to do. The first step will be to get the consent of the League, which is not expected to present any difficulty. The opposition—and it will be formidable—will come from the Zionists and the Arabs. There will be resistance by each, both to the main policy and to a number of the particular proposals. The Jews will denounce us as betrayers of the Balfour Declaration, under which the whole of Palestine, and not merely a fraction of it, was to be their National home. The Arabs will ask by what right they are robbed of a large part of their country. The answer, " salus reipublicae suprema lex," is hardly likely to content them. What is counted on to win acceptance for the plan is its promise of a real independence for each people—a State, limited in area it is true, in which nevertheless the fullest political and economic sovereignty can be exercised by Jew or by Arab. No one imagines that this plan will be carried through without a severe struggle. We can only hope that the British troops which are standing by in Palestine will not have to be used to quell the civil war.

The Non-Intervention Problem

The fate of Non-Intervention is still on the knees of the gods—or perhaps we should say of the dictators. The next meeting of the Committee will not be held till after we have gone to press, and it is unlikely in any case that this meeting will register a final decision. The British Government cling—quite properly, no doubt—to the desperate hope of making non-intervention really effective, and it is possible that some plan may yet be evolved which Germany and Italy will accept, and which will not give them and Franco everything—or something—for nothing. But in the last few days French opinion has hardened against any such scheme as would require France to close her Spanish frontier whilst the Portuguese-Spanish frontier and the sea coast are left uncontrolled. Nor are the French in favour of the granting of belligerent rights to both sides—at least not until the withdrawal of foreign volunteers has been begun and is being honestly carried out. For our part, we remain sceptical about that withdrawal, especially after Mussolini's pronouncements on the matter. And we should still not be satisfied—and who, indeed, could be satisfied, except Germany and Italy and the rebels?—with a withdrawal that covered men but not aeroplanes, guns and war material in general. It is by all these far more than by his imported foot soldiers that the scales have been weighted in Franco's favour.

General Franco's Demands

Franco and his Fascist friends, of course, know that, and there is nothing very surprising in the reports that he is ready to agree to an evacuation of foreign troops in return for a recognition of his belligerent rights. It is notorious that there has not been much love lost between the Spanish rebels and their Italian comrades in arms. But even that would leave him his Moors, who, he claims, are Spaniards but in the Valencia Government's view are foreigners. Moreover, Franco's Note to the Powers, which was issued on Tuesday from Salamanca, adds to the difficulties. It is a boast and a threat, accusing Great Britain and France in particular of intervening against his high and just cause, and warning them that, if this continues, he will close his trade doors upon them. The immediate effect in this country has been to cause annoyance rather than alarm; whatever the British Government may think about the prospects of competing with Hitler for the iron ore and other economic benefits which a "Nationalist" regime in Spain might offer, they can hardly be pleased, or brought to terms, by a pistol levelled at their heads in this crude fashion. And if the British Government were willing to grant Franco's demands for belligerent rights, the French, as we have said, are not. Unless, therefore, France is overpersuaded by Britain, or a miraculous agreement is come to—and carried out—for the withdrawal of volunteers, there remains a risk of the pistol going off.

M. Bonnet at Work

Reports from Paris suggest that M. Bonnet proposes to raise about Frs. 8,000 million in further tax receipts by a 20 per cent. surcharge on existing direct tax assessments and by increasing Post Office and telephone charges, railway fares, and the price of tobacco and other monopolies by an amount corresponding to the recent depreciation of the currency, i.e., about 16 per cent. The Government is spared the embarrassment of the threatened hotel lock-out, which was called off at the last moment on a provisional agreement providing for a slightly elastic 46–54-hour week. M. Blum, who meets the Socialist Congress at Marseilles this week-end, emphasised in an important speech at Bordeaux last Sunday the international implications of the last Cabinet crisis. In view of the Spanish-Mediterranean situation, he argued, it would have been impossible for him to have taken up the Senate's challenge and started a first-class constitutional conflict. The Socialist Party is still bitterly resentful, and the Marseilles Congress will doubtless pass some pretty stiff anti-Senate resolutions. Through its denial of plenary powers to M. Blum, the Senate has succeeded in identifying itself, in the popular view, with High Finance. Actually it was following its traditional policy of playing for time and safety. It preferred MM. Chautemps and Bonnet to MM. Blum and Vincent-Auriol, a return to greater "liberalism" (even at the cost of franc depreciation) rather than the *étatisation* and coercion of capital which, it feared, M. Blum would finally have been driven to apply.

Stresses and Strains in Germany

An article published last Monday by the *Financial News* was devoted to a strictly objective but extremely significant account of the increasing financial and economic strain under which the Third Reich is labouring. Last winter's economy drive proved politically too unpopular to be long continued; public expenditure is again soaring and outlay on armaments, as a result of various defects in mechanised equipment disclosed by the "war of rehearsal" in Spain, has reached a new record level. Total budgetary expenditure this year will be Rm. 22,000 millions, as compared with Rm. 18,600 millions last year and only Rm. 6,700 in 1932–33. To meet the Treasury's pressing needs a plan has had to be adopted whereby both State-controlled bodies like the railways and the privately owned heavy industries will raise money by new bond and share issues and relend the proceeds to the Government. Meanwhile, the shortage of raw materials is becoming more acute, the harvest promises to be mediocre, the quality of industrial production is deteriorating through the use of substitutes, prices are mounting rapidly and there are signs of serious labour unrest. This analysis of the situation is amply confirmed by the last issue of *Deutschland-Berichte*, published in Prague by the German Social Democratic Party. Things are obviously far from easy for the Nazi dictatorship. It is still doubtless in a position to crush every opponent, and the arrest of Dr. Niemöller suggests that Hitler is prepared to go to all lengths in annihilating the independence of the Confessional Protestant Church, as well as of the Catholic clergy. At the same time, though the Communist wireless station appears to have been "jammed" more or less out of existence by official "interference," the German Freedom Party is succeeding in circulating more and more anti-Nazi pamphlets in Germany. The latest, No. 12, entitled *Warum?* consists of a series of damning questions asking why the German people is being kept in the dark with regard to Spain, foreign opinion, the failure of the Four Year Plan and so forth. Growing numbers of Germans are looking vainly to Hitler for an answer.

The Irish Elections

Mr. De Valera has had a setback in the Free State general election. In the old Dail he had a majority of 4 over all parties, and of 24 over Mr. Cosgrave. In the new Dail (whose membership is reduced from its former total of 153 to 138) he ties with the rest combined—or, since the Speaker is a member of his party, is in a minority of one. But this in actual practice is not likely to mean a deadlock; for the Labour Party will almost certainly support Fianna Fail, as it has in the past, though it may take its own line on certain matters. The Labour members now number 13, as against the 8 in the last Dail; their increase was one of the most notable features of the election. There is talk in Dublin of another possibility, which is that Mr. De Valera will go to the country again a few months hence. But as to that we must wait and see. Simultaneously with the polling there has been a plebiscite on the new draft Constitution. This has not fulfilled the Government's hopes, but has shown a substantial majority in favour, and Mr. De Valera declares that he will put his Constitution into force—though Labour may demand amendments in it as a price of their support.

The Government and Unemployment

Mr. Ernest Brown, in his speech on the Ministry of Labour vote last Tuesday, showed his usual stentorian cheerfulness. He pointed to the big fall in the unemployment figures, and predicted a further fall in the coming year. He did, however, admit that all was not quite for the best in the best of all possible worlds. There were the problems of the unemployed men of 55 and over, of the young men who had never been in work, and of domestic service, with its bad traditions in many households and its low status. Something would have to be done to solve all these. But no hint was given that the Minister or the Government have any definite solutions to offer, though the problems have been staring them in the face for some years. On the general question of the unemployment figures Opposition speakers again protested against complacency, and reminded the House of the slump that must presently succeed the present rearmament boom. It is absurd to decry this as pessimism. It is only common sense to demand that the Government shall look beyond the end of their nose and be prepared with a policy against a dangerous and disastrous situation. Mr. Brown also gave further particulars about the inquiry, which will begin in October, into the cost of living. When the new index is at last established, it is highly probable that the Government will be confronted with another set of problems—including that of the rates of unemployment benefit.

Regimentation of Steel

The report of the Import Duties Advisory Committee gives the steel industry a handsome coat of whitewash. The conclusion reached is that good organisation—the price which the industry was expected to pay for its tariff protection—is being admirably attained under the wise direction of the Iron and Steel Federation. Everything possible has been done, by increasing imports, to overcome the world-wide steel shortage; there is no ground for taking exception to the repeated increases in the price of steel; the "quasi-monopolistic position" which the industry has been given in the home market has not been utilised to exploit the consumer. Possibly not; it is difficult to prove or disprove allegations that prices fixed by cartels or kindred associations are unjustified by costs. What emerges clearly from the report is that the British iron and steel industry is developing on a voluntary basis a curious form of highly centralised control. The Federation already regulates prices, imports and raw material supplies. It intends apparently to exercise a decisive influence on output by raising a levy on tonnage and using the proceeds to subsidise high-cost producers in time of boom and keep them out of production, by paying their maintenance charges, during slumps. It is also devising machinery for initiating new projects, as well as regulating such extensions as its individual members may propose. There is an overwhelming case for planning in the iron and steel industry; but is a capitalist producers' trade association the right sort of body to carry it out?

The Busman's Digestion

One of the complaints of the London bus strikers, it will be remembered, was that the conditions of their work made them abnormally liable to gastric troubles. The Court of Inquiry expressed no opinion on this; it was a matter, they thought, which required fuller investigation. There has now been published the report of a Committee of the Industrial Health Research Board, which goes far to prove the justice of the busmen's complaint. Dr. A. Bradford Hill, the author of this report, finds, after comparing records of busmen and tramwaymen, that the bus drivers show an excess of gastric sickness of 12 to 14 per cent. over tram drivers, and bus conductors of 15 to 18 per cent. over tram conductors. These figures are for all ages; but the relative excess varies with age. In the case of the drivers it is found between 30 and 49, in that of the conductors between 20 and 39. About three-quarters of the bus drivers were between 30 and 50, and two-thirds of the conductors between 20 and 40.

The Lords and Divorce

By the narrow majority of 89 votes to 74 the House of Lords negatived on Wednesday an amendment to the Marriage Bill deleting the whole of the first ("five years' time limit") clause. Had it not been for the consideration that the deletion of the time limit might have led to the Bill being destroyed altogether by its reactionary opponents in the Commons, the amendment would undoubtedly have been carried. Instead, a compromise was reached. The time limit is reduced from five years to three and the Courts are given discretion to dissolve marriages still earlier in cases of "exceptional hardship" or "exceptional depravity." This is a distinct improvement, though petitioners will have to depend greatly on "the luck of the draw" in the matter of judges. An amendment proposed by Lord Elton seeking to debar divorce in cases of incurable insanity was very properly turned down by 95 votes to 31, and Lord Dawson failed to get homosexuality included as grounds for divorce. The highly objectionable fourth clause, placing on petitioners the onus of proving that there had been no collusion with the respondent, was unhappily passed.

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THE POLICY OF DELAY

EVERYONE who is old enough to remember the last war and intelligent enough to have learnt any of its lessons, will agree with much that Mr. Keynes says in the article we publish this week. It is an impressive reminder of permanent truths: that war is the greatest of human disasters; that it never achieves the idealistic objects which figure so loudly in the utterances of politicians and journalists; that it is the part of wisdom to ignore insults and of folly to say that war is inevitable until it is upon us. John Bright was right. When they told him that war was inevitable sooner or later, he replied that he preferred it later. Many "inevitable" wars have never taken place.

We agree then that the claims of peace are paramount, but we recognise with Mr. Keynes that in certain circumstances war, whether morally justifiable or not, will take place. The first task of statesmanship, therefore, is so to conduct policy that such circumstances do not arise. In conditions of international anarchy there can be no assurance of doing this. With no tribunal for the settlement of disputes, with no loyalty to any accepted law and no reliable sanction behind that law, policy becomes a thing of makeshifts, of dishonourable bargaining, a desperate game of poker with civilisation as the stake. That is why, as Mr. Keynes agrees, the betrayal of Abyssinia was an error that it is not easy to forgive. As we know from General De Bono's book in which he describes the cynical calculations which inspired the Duce and himself in the conquest of Abyssinia, the oil sanction, which the National Government refused to impose, would not have plunged us into war, but would have made it impossible for Italy to wage war against Abyssinia or, for that matter, against us. With that experience in mind and with the story of the Laval-Hoare proposals as a lesson learnt, we have viewed with profound suspicion the Government's declarations that its only object was to keep clear of the "ideological" conflict in Spain and that any positive policy would intensify the danger of European war. We have the best of reasons for disbelieving all such statements. Mr. Eden has now himself admitted that they were misleading.

Britain has never been "disinterested," as Sir Samuel Hoare put it, in the fight of "rival factions" in Spain. It could only have been so if the Government had consisted of Little Englanders prepared to see the destruction of the Empire rather than fight. That would be an honourable, if surprising, position. But it has never been the Government's position and now at length, after twelve months' agony in Spain, Mr. Eden blandly admits that Britain is so vitally affected both strategically and economically that it is perfectly prepared to fight for its interests there or anywhere in the Mediterranean. Mr. Eden might have added a further factor. Britain is bound, according to all the canons of statesmanship, to prevent Spain from becoming a German and Italian colony, if only because France, now our close military ally, would be hemmed in and helpless if Italian and German armies were massed in the passes of the Pyrenees and hostile battleships in a position to cut off France's communications with her North African colonies and deprive her of the use of her black army.

It is against this background that the Foreign Office policy of delay must be considered. Its highest endeavour is to divide the two Fascist Powers which, on the assumption that Britain would behave as Britain did in the Abyssinian dispute, have amused themselves by double-crossing Mr. Eden, while discussing on what terms first one and the other would agree to be bought off. The results of this policy, as Mr. Keynes admits, have been cruel and humiliating. It has sacrificed thousands of innocent Spanish people in a war forced on them by a Fascist revolt which the Spanish Government could have crushed at the outset if allowed the arms to which under the ordinary rules of international law it was entitled. Such a policy one could only justify on Mr. Keynes' plea that it made general war less likely. That, however, is exactly what we believe that it has not done. To-day, twelve months later, the Government is taking a firmer stand in the interests of Empire. If peace hangs rather less precariously now than it did a week ago, it is because British policy has become less ambiguous. In asking for such a statement of British policy on many occasions during the last year, we have had in mind the certainty that Britain would ultimately defend her interests and that if she spoke out early she would also save Spanish democracy and, reversing the case of Abyssinia, make peace in Europe afterwards less terribly difficult to build and to maintain. At the beginning of the struggle, neither Germany nor Italy was vitally committed to this venture; to-day, there are thousands of Italian and German soldiers and hundreds of Italian and German aeroplanes in Spain which would never have gone there had British policy been clearly defined. Their withdrawal now presents the Dictators with a difficult problem of prestige. Were we not right, purely in the interests of peace, in asking for an honest declaration of British policy at a much earlier stage?

Mr. Keynes is in our view mistaken in regarding the policy of delay as a peace policy. The distinction lies not between a peaceful and a warlike policy, but between a definite policy of opposition to aggression and an indefinite one of condoning it where it is not inimical to imperial interests and arming to resist it where it is. The British Government has now clearly explained that it is willing to fight for British interests—for our Imperial position in Palestine and Egypt, for Gibraltar, for Malta, for anything that can be called part of the British Empire, however acquired and however little better our claim to it than Italy's. But for Spanish democracy, which we were not in serious danger of having to fight for but which we could probably have saved at the beginning of this conflict by an unambiguous use of our diplomatic influence, we were not prepared to raise a finger. No one who has followed the story of the Non-intervention Committee, the conduct of Lord Plymouth upon it, or the evidence published in this and other papers from Bilbao and other parts of Spain, can doubt that British policy has been in its tepid way rather favourable to Franco than to the Spanish Government. Mr. Keynes truly says that victory in war does not enable the victor to impose his ideology on the conquered. But that remark scarcely applies to the Spanish war in which victory for General Franco means the dark ages of Fascism in Spain, while victory for the Government means at least the retention of those advances to freedom that Spain has

painfully made through these years of bitter struggle. On that issue Mr. Eden has not been able to take any stand; on Malta or Gibraltar he can be unambiguous.

Finally, there is a last consideration which Mr. Keynes has not noticed but which to us seems of the very first importance. What do we gain out of the policy of a hand-to-mouth bargaining? We do not gain security; we do not gain, if our analysis is correct, a longer period of peace. The advantage, from a purely material point of view, of making it clear on which side we stood in the Spanish struggle would have been considerable. It is a great misfortune that the Foreign Office has never realised, as the Quai D'Orsay has, the Imperial value of the collective system. In England, the League of Nations is still officially represented as the romantic conception of high-minded but dangerous pacifists. Actually, it offered, as Sir Norman Angell is never weary of telling an unresponsive world, the one practical means of self-defence. His latest book* which elaborates that thesis once again from a new point of view, also contains a selection from the writings and speeches of Conservative spokesmen which show that never for a moment have they either understood the Covenant or intended to make it a reality.

We are not so simple to-day as to imagine that the League, as it was conceived, can be revived. Sir John Simon, Sir Samuel Hoare and M. Laval fatally discredited it. Even so, at this late hour, when war may be close to us, when we cannot avoid that second consideration, to which Mr. Keynes refers, of finding good ground on which to stand and allies to stand with us, is it really wise to tell the United States, Russia, Czechoslovakia and all the smaller nations who looked to us to champion the cause of democracy that we care for nothing except our Imperial interests? It leaves us morally bankrupt, uneasily explaining as one small nation after another falls victim to the Fascist aggressor that we are not concerned with ideological struggles; it leaves us desperately staving off the evil day without even the hope that the collective system, difficult though it was, did offer of building a structure through which some day peace could be substituted for anarchy.

BRITISH FOREIGN POLICY

W. H. AUDEN'S poem, *Spain*, is fit to stand beside great predecessors in its moving, yet serene expression of contemporary feeling towards the heart-rending events of the political world. The theme of the poem lies in the comparison between the secular achievements of the past and the hope which is possible for the future with the horrors of the present and the sacrifices which perhaps it demands from those of this generation who think and feel rightly. Yesterday, all the past. To-morrow, perhaps the future. "But to-day the struggle," his refrain runs. Auden conceives of "the struggle" in terms of immediate war and force, of death and killing:

> To-day the deliberate increase in the chances of death,
> The conscious acceptance of guilt in the necessary murder.

In this he is speaking for many chivalrous hearts. Yet, whilst he teaches us, as a poet should, how we should feel, the object of this article is to question whether he rightly directs how, at this moment at least, we should act.

I view with revulsion the growing tendency to make of the struggle between the two ideologies (or would it be conceded that there are three?) another War of Religion, to believe that the issue can or will be settled by force of arms, and to feel that it is our duty to hasten to any quarter of the world where those of our faith are oppressed. It is only too easy for men to feel like this. The Crusades and the Thirty Years' War actually occurred. But does it seem, looking back, that it was a duty to join in them, or that they settled anything? Assume that the war occurs, and let us suppose, for the sake of argument, that we win. What then? Shall we ourselves be the better for it and for what it will have brought with it? What are we going to do with the defeated? Are we to impose our favourite ideology on them (whatever, by then, it may be) in an up-to-date Peace Treaty, or do we assume that they will adopt it with spontaneous enthusiasm? At best we should be back, it seems to me, exactly where we were. Defeat is complete disaster. Victory, as usual, would be useless, and probably pernicious. It is an illusion to believe that conscious acceptance of guilt in the necessary murder can settle what is mainly a moral issue.

Therefore, and furthermore, I maintain that the claims of Peace are paramount; though this seems to be an out-of-date view in what used to be pacifist circles. It is our duty to brolong peace, hour by hour, day by day, for as long as we can. We do not know what the future will bring, except that it will be quite different from anything we could predict. I have said in another context that it is a disadvantage of "the long run" that in the long run we are all dead. But I could have said equally well that it is a great advantage of "the short run" that in the short run we are still alive. Life and history are made up of short runs. If we are at peace in the short run, that is something. The best we can do is to put off disaster, if only in the hope, which is not necessarily a remote one, that something will turn up. While there is peace, there is peace. It is silly and presumptuous to say that war is inevitable; for no one can possibly know. The only conclusion which is certain is that we cannot avoid war by bringing it on. If, thinking of Spain, someone urges that self-interest does not entitle us to abandon others, I answer that for Spain peace—and to-day, I think, I would add peace on any terms—is her greatest interest. Spain will work out her future in due course. It is not the outcome of the civil war which will settle it. It would be much more plausible to argue that British imperial interests or French security require the defeat of Franco than that the interests of Spaniards require it. Those who believe in the efficacy of war are misunderstanding the kind of power we have to influence the future.

But I do not, therefore, claim that war can always be avoided. I do not need to answer the question whether war is even defensible. The question does not arise, inasmuch as our knowledge of human nature tells us that in practice there are circumstances when war on our part, whether defensible or not, is unavoidable. We are brought, therefore, to the second aspect of foreign policy. The first duty of foreign policy is to avoid war. Its second duty is to ensure that, if it occurs, the circumstances shall be the most favourable possible for our cause. Let us consider the immediate position from this point of view.

By postponement we gain peace to-day. Have we anything to lose by it? Our capacity for cunctation is one of our most powerful and characteristic national weapons. It has been our age-long instrument against dictators. Since Fabius Maximus there has scarcely been a stronger case for cunctation than there is to-day. It is maddening and humiliating to have to take so much lip. We may, conceivably, have to submit to greater humiliations and worse betrayals than any yet. Those who applaud war and believe they have something to gain from it have an inevitable advantage, which cannot possibly be taken from them, in a game of bluff and in the preliminary manoeuvres; though all the time they may be running unperceived risks, which one day will catch them out. Bu *we* have to look farther ahead; believing that time and chanc

* The Defence of the Empire (Hamilton, 6s.).

are with us, and taking precautions that, *if* we are forced to act, we can make quite sure. This seems cold and shifty to the poet. Yet I claim the benefit of the first part of one of Auden's stanzas :

> What's your proposal? To build the just city? I will.
> I agree.

leaving to him the second part :

> Or is it the suicide pact, the romantic
> Death? Very well, I accept.

For consider the immediate political factors staring us in the face. At the moment Russia is disorganised and France at a disadvantage. Each is at a low ebb but each needs mainly time. Before long we ourselves will possess the most predominant sea-power in European waters that we have ever enjoyed in our history. Meanwhile what is happening to the brigand powers? One of them is busily engaged in outraging every creed in turn. If they could find another institution or another community to insult or injure, they would do so. Both of them are spending a lot of money on an intensive propaganda to persuade the rest of the world that they are the enemies of the human race. It is having the desired result, not least in the United States. No one trusts or respects their word. They have not a single friend or sympathiser in the whole world, for I doubt if even Japan thrills greatly to their croonings. Yet even so, all this needs time to sink in, here at home as well as elsewhere. The full abomination is understood to-day in a degree and over an area much greater than a year ago. These tactics are not characteristic of great statesmen and conquerors. They appear to be morbid, pathological, diseased. I gravely doubt their technical efficiency and expect that every sort of idiocy is going on behind the scenes. It is unlikely that those who talk so much nonsense will act quite differently; or that they, who persecute the mind and all its works, will be employing it to the best advantage. It is very probable that, given time, they will over-play their hands, overreach themselves and make a major blunder. It is in the nature of their type of behaviour that this should happen. And if, indeed, the thieves were to have a little more success, nothing is likelier than that they would fall out amongst themselves.

Near the beginning of the Abyssinian affair our Foreign Office was guilty of the gravest and most disastrous error of policy in recent history. It is natural, therefore, to distrust them. But though it has been hateful in its immediate consequences and cruel in some of its details, I am not inclined to criticise the broad outline of Mr. Eden's Spanish policy. I should have been afraid if his critics had had a chance to take over from him. The task of a cunctator is always a thankless one. To be for ever allowing the brigands yet a little more rope, to be holding up the cup for them to fill yet fuller is not a distinguished office. It is never possible, unfortunately, to estimate a statesman by his results, since we never have for comparison the consequences of the alternative course. But I do not judge his policy to have been inconsistent as yet with the two prime objects stated above.

I bid Auden, therefore, to pass by on the other side. If he will be patient and unheroic, in due course, perhaps, he will be shown (in his own words) :

> History the operator, the
> Organiser, Time the refreshing river.

J. M. KEYNES

A LONDON DIARY

EVEN Prime Ministers must have their jokes, and I am sure that Lord Cecil has enough sense of humour to relish the exquisite absurdity of his correspondence with Mr. Chamberlain. In its passion for gathering in important and prestige-giving persons whatever their opinions and record, the League of Nations Union asked the Prime Minister to become an Honorary President of the Union. Mr. Chamberlain accepted and then proceeded to warn Lord Cecil that his retention of his new office depended on the Union refraining from criticism of the Government. Lord Cecil asks for particular examples of departure from the non-partisan character of the Union and remarks that they are perhaps explained by the dubiety of Conservative support for the League. . . . Such persiflage could be indefinitely prolonged. Personally I find the joke rather feeble. It would be better to drop it and for Lord Cecil and the Union to say : " The Covenant is a definite document and the Union stands for a new approach and method in diplomacy and for quite explicit commitments. We do not want as members those who do not support the Covenant, and we must agitate for the Covenant even if it means attacking Governments." And Mr. Chamberlain would answer with equal honesty : " Neither I nor the National Government have believed in this Utopian nonsense which we have done our best to put an end to ever since we showed our disbelief in it when Japan invaded Manchuria six years ago. Therefore I can't be an Honorary President or anything but an opponent of yours." Wouldn't that be an improvement? Such straightforwardness would certainly be hard on *Times* leader-writers, one of whom complained, that " it is an undoubted fact that this body [the League of Nations Union] has ceased to be a comfortable spiritual home for supporters of the Government." Now, in view of the story of Abyssinia and with Sir Samuel Hoare in the Government, is not that just too bad?

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As I may be thought biased I asked a Conservative friend of mine what he thought of last Sunday's Fascist march. He writes : With the help of a car and the back-streets, I saw last Sunday's march of Mosley's once-Black Legion at three different points between Kentish Town and Trafalgar Square. As a demonstration of the " gathering might " of all-British Fascism, it was unimpressive : the column can hardly have taken more than ten or twelve minutes to pass. In comparison with processions of a year or so back, it showed, too, how much the ban on uniforms has weakened the possible spectacular effect of these marches. The spectacle was totally swamped by the flanking lines of police and the conspicuously large and noisily hostile hedges of onlookers. The marchers moved from first to last through a hullabaloo of jeers and gibes. The loudest noise was, of course, a Communist noise, and there was here and there a note of hysteria in it. But nobody could mistake the really deep resentment of even the non-political onlookers. Discounting the element of pure faction, the crowd seemed virtually solid in its distaste for whatever it was that this scrappy and rather scrubby parade stood for. A Communist procession would be watched by a similar cross-section of Londoners in comparative silence, but against this they spontaneously reacted with a sort of grave disgust. But it was a poor show. Even the Leader himself, in a grey flannel suit and with a rather small labarum carried behind his head, was inconspicuous. He occasionally raised his arm and smiled to an individual salute from the pavements : but very occasionally. And what he said in the Square nobody could tell, or cared.

* * *

A friend just back from the Berlin Congress of the International Chamber of Commerce sends me a striking account of the reception given by Dr. Goebbels to the delegates. They came from all parts of the world and were there, of course, as objects of Propaganda. Believing no doubt that the bourgeois are all alike, Dr. Goebbels invited them to what is called a Sommerfest at the Pfaueninsel, one of the small islands of the Wannssee. After half an hour's journey from Berlin in specially provided cars, the 2,000 odd delegates were conducted over a bridge made up of pontoons placed at close intervals containing in almost every one a Reichswehr soldier. On stepping off on to the island, they were led along a winding path to the central arena through a glade lined at equally close intervals with obviously hand-picked Nordic maidens dressed in the manner of sublime chorus girls in immaculate tights and white satin blouses, standing stiffly to attention, on guard with long delicate wands. On emerging from the glade into

a vast clearing of greensward, the rapidly tiring business men and wives were in no mood to resist the attractions of one of the best open-air spreads they had ever seen. They were even eager to express their kind regards to Dr. Goebbels—who made a personal reception of the whole affair—in order to get down to junketing. Once it had begun only a few cared to think about the effect of the incipient drizzle on the lightly clad guard of female grenadiers.

* * *

The feast flattered the most expensive taste in food and drink. Among the many meats were noticeably large portions of venison said to have been supplied through head-huntsman Göring. There were also in abundance delicate shellfish dishes, pâtés, and other delicacies, all washed down in a Niagara-like flow of champagne. Half-way through the junketing, the sky was suddenly lit up with thousands of lights converging on a circular stage raised high above dining tables, on which then swarmed the Propaganda Minister's special *corps de ballet*. Their pleasing display was successful in the sense that it proved that at least in one respect Dr. Goebbels was capable of not offending the canons of good taste. That was just as well, for his next turn was little short of terrifying. No sooner had the ballet finished than what can only be described as a Nordic firework display was set going. The noise was even more impressive than the coloured spangles of shooting lights, and this was explained by the report that field guns placed behind the bushes were at the same time firing off blanks in rapid succession. That was, in fact, the parting shot. The party dispersed slightly bewildered, but all feeling slightly amused, like the American business man from the Middle West, who remarked: "Sure, that was some firemen's ball."

* * *

Frank A. Vanderlip, of New York, whose death is just reported, was an unusual banker. At the close of the war he was president of the National City Bank, then the largest in America, and had organised the national savings. He was the first banker of the world, I believe, to tell the plain truth about reparations and proclaim the necessity of a non-punitive and non-national settlement. The book in which he stated his conclusions was published a few months only before he relinquished his headship of the National City. Thereafter he went his way as an untrammelled authority in the money world, having the further distinction of being the first financier to warn the nation against the corrupt gang which was ruining the unhappy President Harding.

* * *

A very unusual strike occurred last Monday. All law reporters who are members of the National Union of Journalists downed pens for the day. They struck because the Press Association refused to receive a N.U.J. deputation which wanted to argue with the P.A. about the dismissal of a P.A. law reporter. A settlement was reached on Tuesday, the P.A. agreeing to receive a N.U.J. deputation and subsequently suspending their notice of dismissal pending a further meeting of the P.A. Board. The interesting question is the reason for the reporter's notice of dismissal. It arose out of the curious fact that the important and complex case of Groom *v.* Crocker, heard on June 3rd, 4th, 7th and 8th before Mr. Justice Hawke, was not generally reported in the newspapers (not even in the *Times*, which has its own law reporters) during the four days' hearing. A number of papers complained to the P.A. which sacked the reporter. A lot of stories are going round about all this: you can hear people in the Temple solemnly saying that judges have written to the *Times* complaining, and that their complaints accounted for the full and good report of the case, summarising the pleadings and findings of the jury, on June 17th when the case was in the List for argument on the findings of the jury. However, I am told that there was in fact nothing sinister about the failure to report the case in the London papers and that the P.A. reporter did report it for one or two provincial papers and also apparently for Lloyd's List. The reason now given for the failure to report this case generally is that the pleadings were so complicated that it was considered that an abbreviated report would be misleading. But, then, if the reason was as simple and satisfactory as that, why was the reporter dismissed?

* * *

The other night after a show I was given a drink at Claridge's. The hall was full of girls and boys strolling and sitting out in the intervals of a Deb ball. The current Victorian vogue was very conspicuous in the clothes of most of the girls. What a difference, I was thinking, from the Bright Young People when I was a young man in the Roaring Twenties! At that moment a particularly demure-looking girl came along wearing a crinoline, with a wreath of rosebuds on her head and her hair in ringlets. As she passed me "My God," she said to her partner, "My God, my mother is a swine!"

CRITIC

THIS ENGLAND

Our prize of 5/- for the contribution at the head of the column goes this week to G. S. Burton.

All cuttings should be addressed to "This England," 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1.

Extracts should not be sent without their context. The article or passage should be sent in full with the proposed excerpt marked.

When I went to see *Sanders of the River* and *Wings Over Africa*, the black women hardly wore anything. Now, I don't think that is right; after all, they are human the same as we, and just because they happen to be black it does not mean to say that they do not have to wear anything.

It may be their own way in their own country, but at least they ought to put something on them when taking part in a film.

Also it is not very nice if you have a brother or boy-friend sitting next to you.—Letter in *Picturegoer*.

Two young women teachers, tenanting a flat belonging to the Dudley Corporation, hung out a banner on Coronation Day bearing the words, "We Want Scholarships, Not Battleships." The Public Works Committee of the Corporation took a serious view of this action and gave the teachers notice to terminate their tenancy. The teachers apologised and the Public Works Committee, in consequence, decided to recommend the Town Council to delete the recommendation. A debate on the matter took place at the Town Council meeting. The deletion of the recommendation was opposed by Councillor Emms. "These are two of our teachers," he said, "and they ought to know better than dishonour our King and Country. I think they should not only quit our premises, but that they should quit their posts. They are not fit to teach the dear little children of our town."—*Schoolmaster*.

Later, in a talk with Mr. Springett, he remarked on the amazing fact that at our Lord's first coming the two women concerned with it were His Mother, Mary, and St. John the Baptist's mother, Elizabeth, and that in the last days of which He spoke the names of the first ladies in the land are Mary and Elizabeth.—*Daily Colonist*.

One may even wonder if the alleged untidiness of the English is not almost entirely due to the presence of countless Irish settlers. It may even be true to say that the greater part of the paper left in the streets of London during the Coronation was left there by Irish visitors.—Article in *Birkenhead News*.

I am assured that the experience of the Spanish campaign has been to cast grave doubts on the efficiency of the tank. Notably, a projectile has been tried out in Spain that on bursting practically splits even the largest tank in two.

A steady swing-back to the use of cavalry is predicted, and I am informed that the German War Office has recently made large purchases of horses in Rumania and also the Irish Free State.—*Sunday Referee*.

If stability at 125 proves right then instead of chastising the speculator the French Government is giving him some reward for his vision in taking his money away. That is the right thing to do.

The man who takes his money away from a country that treats capital badly is doing himself and his country a service, for a flight of capital in the long run is the only pressure which will bring about essential reforms.—*Evening Standard*.

THE ACTIVITIES OF COLONEL BECK

ONE of the most sinister figures in Europe is Colonel Beck, the Foreign Minister of Poland, who has been one of Hitler's most active agents since he was appointed to his present office more than four years ago. Long before 1933 Colonel Beck was in close relations with the German and also, it would seem, the Italian Government. It was indeed the closeness of those relations that led the French Government to demand in 1921 Colonel Beck's recall from the post of military attaché at the Polish Embassy in Paris. Ever since that incident Colonel Beck has nourished a bitter hatred of France which has undoubtedly been an important factor in his conduct of Polish foreign policy. Colonel Beck's personal feeling, however, would not have been enough to bring about the change in Polish policy that took place in 1933. Poland was detached from France and drawn into the German orbit for the same reason that has led Jugoslavia and Rumania to go in the same direction, namely, lack of confidence in France arising from the feebleness and ineptitude of French policy, which has become increasingly subservient to the British Foreign Office.

The first cause of the estrangement of Poland from France was the acceptance by the Daladier Government in 1933 of the Four Power Pact, which happily has never come into force, as it has not been ratified by all the signatories. The Poles rightly saw in that pact an attempt initiated by Hitler and Mussolini to supersede the League of Nations by a junta of the four great Western Powers. They saw, too, that it was a menace to Polish independence and that it would deprive Poland of any effective voice in Europe. In the spring of 1933, just after the signature of the Four Power Pact, the late Marshal Pilsudski proposed to the French Government joint intervention to prevent the rearming of Germany. The first step would presumably have been to ask the League of Nations for an inquiry into German armaments, under Article 213 of the Treaty of Versailles. If Hitler had refused to consent to the inquiry, as he almost certainly would have, the French and Polish armies, and no doubt also the armies of the Little Entente, would have occupied a great part of German territory. At that time Germany was incapable of making any effective resistance. The French Government refused to do anything and Pilsudski then turned to Germany. In June, 1933, was published the German-Polish declaration in which the two Governments announced their intention of making a non-aggression pact. The Poles, however, were in no hurry to sign a pact, and kept on putting it off in spite of German pressure. In October, 1933, when Germany left Geneva, Pilsudski repeated to the French Government the proposal that he had made in the spring. Again the French Government refused and Pilsudski came to the conclusion that France could not be counted on and that Germany was likely to become the dominant power on the Continent. Polish fears were increased by information received at Warsaw concerning the secret negotiations between Daladier and Hitler, which went much further than is generally known. In January, 1934, the pact between Germany and Poland was signed.

In 1934 Louis Barthou, when he visited Warsaw, told Pilsudski that France would henceforth pursue a firm policy towards Germany. But his policy did not survive his death in October, 1934. Barthou's plan was for a pact of mutual assistance between Germany, Russia, Poland, Czechoslovakia and the Baltic States, guaranteed by France and open to any other state that wished to join it. Germany naturally refused to join in such a pact, which would have been a serious obstacle to German territorial ambitions. The refusal of Germany was anticipated and the pact would still have been possible but for the refusal of Poland to join in it. The reason finally given for the refusal was that Poland would not guarantee the frontiers of Czechoslovakia.

Colonel Beck's policy since 1934 has been consistently hostile to Czechoslovakia. Soon after the signature of the German-Polish Pact he began trying to pick a quarrel with the Czechoslovak Government over the question of the Polish minority in Czechoslovakia. The mobilisation plan of the Polish army was completely changed. Whereas it had formerly been based on the hypothesis of a war in which Poland was on one side and Germany on the other, it was now based on the hypothesis of a war in which Poland and Germany were on one side and Russia and Czechoslovakia on the other. For the first time it provided for mobilisation on the Czechoslovak frontier. Further, Colonel Beck intrigued in Czechoslovakian internal politics. He is in close contact with the Slovak Catholic Party and also with Dr. Kahanek, who is the power behind the throne in the Agrarian Party, of which Beran is the nominal president. Kahanek, who is a man of about 40, is the son of a father of Silesian origin and a Polish Jewish mother. He was formerly a member of the Czechoslovak National Socialist Party to which Dr. Benes belongs, and left it at the same time as Stribrny, with whom he made a violent campaign against Masaryk and Benes. In 1934, on the advice of Colonel Beck, with whom he had got into touch, Kahanek joined the Agrarian Party and became editor of its newspapers.

In the spring of 1935, when Kahanek was organising the election campaign of the Agrarian Party, he was alarmed at the strong movement to the Left in the working class of Czechoslovakia, particularly among the German workmen, which he saw was likely to lead to a great increase in the Socialist and Communist vote. He consulted Colonel Beck, who gave him introductions to Nazi leaders and advised him to go to Berlin to discuss the possibility of dividing the German vote. On the advice of the German Nazis, Kahanek founded the Henlein Party—the German Nazi Party in Czechoslovakia—to divert the German electors from Socialism and Communism. The success of the Henlein Party at the general election, however, was more than Kahanek had bargained for. It won 44 seats in Parliament, only one less than the Agrarian Party. More will probably be heard of Kahanek, who is a bitter opponent of President Benes and his foreign policy, and supports Colonel Beck's policy of forming a block of so-called neutral states from the Baltic to the Adriatic, which would in fact be an anti-Russian block under German, Italian, and Polish influence.

The official statement about the German-Polish Pact issued by the Deutsche Nachrichten Bureau in January, 1934, openly said that one of its effects in practice would be to detach Poland from France. It certainly had that effect. From 1934 the conversations between the French and Polish General Staffs ceased and the Franco-Polish alliance was in abeyance. Colonel Beck did not formally abandon the alliance, partly because Polish opinion, weak as it is, would have risen in revolt against such an abandonment, but also because he wishes to have an alternative policy to fall back on if necessary. Colonel Beck has no more confidence in Hitler than Hitler has in him. Each of them is prepared to play the other false, whenever it suits him, and each knows that the other knows it. In March, 1936, when Hitler sent the German troops into the demilitarised zone, the Polish Government told the French Government—M. Albert Sarraut was then Prime Minister—that if France mobilised and Hitler did not withdraw the troops Poland would at once go to the aid of France. Colonel Beck realised the vital importance of the demilitarised zone to Eastern Europe, and saw that if the Germans were allowed to militarise it, the whole situation in Europe would be changed. When the French Government capitulated to Hitler under British pressure, Colonel Beck no doubt came to the conclusion that France would inevitably become a second-class Power under Anglo-German control.

Nowhere has the close understanding between Germany and Poland been more evident than in Geneva. Since 1933 Colonel Beck has been for all practical purposes the representative of Hitler on the Council of the League of Nations. The Polish Government had undertaken to put the Polish army at the disposal of the High Commissioner of Danzig if necessary. Colonel Beck repudiated this obligation, with the result that

the Danzig Nazis were allowed to tear the Constitution to pieces and a population that the League of Nations was pledged to protect was abandoned to its fate. The climax was the appointment at the suggestion of Colonel Beck of a Genevese professor well known for his pro-Nazi sentiments as High Commissioner of Danzig. The British and French Governments are, of course, as much responsible for what is happening in Danzig as Colonel Beck is.

About ten months ago there seemed to be a prospect that the Franco-Polish Alliance would be revived when Marshal Smigly-Rydz, the successor of Pilsudski, visited Paris. He was very amiable and made various promises, most of which he has not kept, not probably because he did not wish to keep them, but because he evidently lacks the strength to stand up to Colonel Beck. The French Government was foolish enough to consent to a loan to Poland without any conditions, and the Polish Government promptly spent the first instalment on buying war material in Germany. I was told the other day that supplies have now been cut off, and I can but hope that it is true. Among other things Marshal Smigly-Rydz promised that the conversations between the French and Polish General Staffs should be resumed, and that the Polish mobilisation plan should again be altered by the suppression of the mobilisation on the Czechoslovak frontier. Whether and how far these promises have been kept I do not know. The subject is one on which the Quai d'Orsay is naturally reticent.

Colonel Beck refused to accompany General Smigly-Rydz on his visit to Paris and shortly after that visit he himself went to Berlin and then to London. He appears to have been encouraged in both capitals to continue his policy of "neutrality." At any rate, he has since pursued it more vigorously than ever. He has visited Brussels, Belgrade, and Bucharest in his capacity of commercial traveller for Hitler. At Bucharest he urged the Rumanian Government to make a pact with Italy so as to separate Rumania from Czechoslovakia, and proposed to extend the Polish-Rumanian treaty in such a way as to oblige Rumania to make war on Czechoslovakia in the event of war between that country and Poland.

"Pertinax" has rendered a service to Europe by revealing in the *Echo de Paris* of June 27th that Colonel Beck took advantage of the visit of the King of Rumania to Warsaw to go even further than he went at Bucharest. He proposed to convert the defensive alliance between Poland and Rumania into an offensive alliance against Russia, and also, no doubt, against Czechoslovakia. He further proposed that Poland and Rumania should guarantee internal order in their respective countries—that is to say, if either the Polish or the Rumanian people tried to overthrow their dictatorship, the other dictator would go to the aid of his threatened colleague. Such a provision as this in an international treaty must surely be unprecedented. "Pertinax" further said that General Samsonovici, head of the Rumanian General Staff, was dismissed by the King of Rumania because he objected to Colonel Beck's proposals, which are clearly incompatible with the Franco-Polish Alliance and the pact of the Little Entente.

At Belgrade Colonel Beck prepared the way for the visit of Baron von Neurath. At the end of that visit an official communiqué announced that the point of view of the German and Jugoslav Governments on the political situation was identical. If this is to be taken literally it means that Jugoslavia repudiates its obligations to France and the Little Entente and is prepared to sacrifice Austria and Czechoslovakia to Germany. The Czechoslovak Government was greatly encouraged by the declarations of the French Government both in Berlin and in Prague that France would support Czechoslovakia in the event of a German attack on that country, but those assurances were due to the personal initiative of Léon Blum, who plays second fiddle in the new French Cabinet. I understand that it is now feared in Prague that the British Government will succeed in forcing France to leave Czechoslovakia to its fate.

ROBERT DELL

Geneva, June 28th.

THE THREATENED WHALE

THE International Conference on Whaling, which lately finished its business in London with the signature of an Agreement for the regulation of whaling, was concerned not, as some might think, with the protection of whales, but with the preservation of the whaling industry—not, that is to say, with preventing the killing of whales, but with securing that there should always be plenty of whales for the killing. One whose sympathy with suffering animals I respect and admire observed to me, in bitter indignation against the inhuman slaughter that occurs annually in the Antarctic Ocean, "So long as whale ships escape disaster I cannot believe in a decent, merciful God." That may sound illogical; but, as we are assured that the mercies of the God of the Christians are not limited to mankind, she, at least, felt that He, who marks the fall of a sparrow, might be expected to intervene sometimes on behalf of the greatest and least offensive of all His creatures.

Whaling is, indeed, a revolting business, but that aspect of it was not within the terms of reference of the Conference which only once, incidentally, referred to it. Whales are the object of commercial exploitation. They stand for margarine, soap and high explosives. We must have edible fats to live; there is a fairly widespread prejudice in favour of washing; and nobody will dispute that we must have the wherewithal to kill one another. It is true that one can get margarine and soap out of vegetable oils—I am no chemist, and I am not so sure about the high explosive—but you can get these essential commodities at the highest rate of profit out of whales. The task, therefore, of the Conference was to ensure, if possible, that the goose which has laid and still lays such abundance of golden eggs should not be killed.

The history of whaling, which covers approximately ten centuries, is one of progressive attrition of the stocks of whales to the verge, if not to the actual point, of extermination. The Biscay Right Whales, or Nordcapers and the Greenland Right Whales are represented to-day, if at all, by a few scattered survivors. Yet we are told that 1,959 Greenland whales were killed in the year 1697, off Spitzbergen, by 188 ships employing the old method of the harpoon thrown by hand from an open boat.

One may believe that, had whalers been content with the old hazardous method of the hand-thrown harpoon, an appreciable remnant of the Arctic Right Whales might still survive; but, in the latter part of the last century, a Norwegian, Svend Foyn, invented the harpoon gun. The gun propels a harpoon, with a grenade at its point, which bursts on impact, to a distance far beyond the power of a man's arm. And this gun is fired from the bow of a sea-going ship from which the stricken whale can easily be controlled. This new method of hunting rapidly reduced the right whale stocks to insignificant numbers and brought within range of destruction two new species of baleen whales which, owing to their speed, their enormous bulk and weight and their great power, were an unattainable and, even if attainable, too formidable quarry for those who employed the old, primitive methods. These were the fin whale, or common rorqual, and the blue whale, or Sibbald's rorqual. The blue whale is the largest of all living creatures, and, almost certainly, the largest the world has ever seen. It is reported to reach a length of 100 feet and its weight has been put, by calculation, at between 150 and 200 tons. The greatest length I can find authentically recorded for a blue whale is 95 feet, but specimens over 90 feet are still fairly common. If one considers the length and bulk of a full-grown elephant in relation to these measurements, it will be seen that the volume of a blue whale is equivalent to that of about twenty elephants. The common rorqual rarely, according to current statistics, reaches a length much beyond 70 feet.

To-day the chief centre of whaling is in the wide, inhospitable Antarctic Ocean. The comparatively narrow waters of the Arctic and of the North, and indeed of the South Seas, having been so denuded of whales that the whaling industry

was steadily declining, the discovery was made that whales, especially blue and fin whales, were abundant in Antarctic waters. The full extent of this abundance was not known till later; but enough was revealed to lead to the establishment of stations with whale factories in South Georgia and elsewhere in the Falkland Islands Dependencies, from which whale catchers went forth during the Antarctic summer and carried on a very profitable business.

The scientific researches of the *Discovery* staff have revealed that the Antarctic Ocean, especially near the ice edge, is richer in certain nutrient salts upon which marine life fundamentally depends than any other waters of the world. As a result these waters are the richest in marine life, beginning with minute plant life. Of marine animals the most abundant by far in these waters are certain prawns growing to a length of about two inches. These little creatures are the almost exclusive food of the 150-ton blue whales and the smaller, though still gigantic, fin whales. In this diet of prawns we find the explanation of the function of the baleen. The baleen whales have enormous heads in proportion to their bodies; they have no teeth and a comparatively small swallow. The baleen depends from the upper jaw in a series of plates like the slats of a Venetian blind. The sides of the lower jaw curve upward; upon it there lies an enormous tongue. The prawns swim in the surface layers of the water in dense masses. The whales cruise through the waters teeming with countless millions of the prawns, and, as they go, take into their huge mouths great gulps of prawns and water. Closing their mouths, they drive the water out by the pressure of their tongues and, the water passing through the baleen, as through a sieve, the prawns are left behind to be swallowed. On this diet the whales grow exceedingly fat, developing a thick layer of blubber to protect the body from cold. From the same source every part of the whale's body, even to the bones, becomes impregnated with oil, which gives them an unrivalled buoyancy in the water. In the water the whale is perfectly at home. A stranded whale is helpless. Its loosely knit skeleton, the bones of which are very porous and saturated with oil, is unfit to support its great bulk against the solid earth, and the stranded whale, in consequence, quickly suffocates itself by the pressure of its own weight upon its lungs.

There are other whales distinguished from the baleen whales as toothed whales. Of these by far the most important is the sperm whale, immortalised in the classical story of Moby Dick. This whale feeds on various fishes, but chiefly, so far as our knowledge goes, on the half-legendary giant squid. A great part of our knowledge of the giant squid comes from examination of the contents of the stomachs of sperm whales. The sperm whale and its quarry sometimes have fierce fights. It is said, though the statement is beyond positive proof, that, in the last resort, the sperm whale plunges to the depths and crushes the squid to death against the sea floor.

The most remarkable feature of the sperm whale is its head, nearly equal in length to one-third of the complete whale, lofty and bluntly truncated. The skull has no bony top but is surmounted by a great fibrous mass divided into compartments, each of which is full of liquid oil. This is the famous spermaceti from which the best wax candles used to be made. As much as five tons of oil may be drawn from the head of a single sperm whale. Beneath this massive head is a long narrow lower jaw armed with about fifty conical teeth corresponding to hardened grooves in the upper jaw. Sperm whales, which range over practically all seas, are brought under protection by the new Agreement. Formerly such measures of protection as were enforced by some Governments, including that of the United Kingdom, were applied only to baleen whales upon which the wholesale destruction of recent years has been chiefly concentrated.

As long as whaling in the Antarctic depended upon land stations within the Falkland Islands and their dependencies, whaling was under control. The Government leased the land stations to whaling companies subject to conditions which put the brake on destruction. But the invention of the mobile floating factory, which could follow the whales, wherever they were, outside territorial waters and therefore outside control, changed the conditions fundamentally. Multitudes of whales were found, especially near the ice edge. The first floating factories achieved success almost beyond the dreams of avarice. In the Antarctic summer of 1930–1931 42,000 whales were killed, and in the corresponding period of 1935–1936 nearly 45,000. It is horrible to think of; but fortunes were made, so what matter? But the latest statistics have shown that the average length of the whales taken is declining steadily. This is the surest indication that the stock is in danger. It means that fewer and fewer whales are being allowed to grow to the age at which they reach physical maturity and reproduce themselves. Rising oil prices led to expansion of the whaling fleets, and nations which had hitherto been content to import their supplies of oil determined to become producers for their own needs. Germany and Japan entered the field. The United Kingdom and Norway, which hitherto had been the only countries that seriously counted in whaling, had already foreseen the danger and had, by legislative controls and by prompting voluntary control among the companies, done something to rationalise the slaughter. They invited the rest of the countries that had whaling interests, however modest, to confer as to future regulation. Most of them responded and this Conference begat the new Agreement. Whether the Agreement will achieve anything, only experience can prove. The Agreement is certainly on the right lines. It imposes a close season of nine months for Antarctic whaling by means of floating factories and of six months for all land stations; it fixes size limits below which the various species of whales may not be killed—and these, though probably not high enough, are higher than any hitherto imposed; it closes large areas of sea altogether to whaling with floating factories; and it regulates the disposal of whales which are killed so as to avoid any waste of material. These regulations must, it seems, slow up destruction; but their effect can be largely defeated by the multiplying of expeditions or by the fostering in other countries of whaling industries free from all restraint.

So far, so good. If these regulations achieve their object of conserving the stock of whales, they will cause satisfaction not only to the money-makers, but also to those who hate to see man destroying species they can never replace. They will give little satisfaction to those who regard with horror the brutal slaughter of helpless, harmless creatures. But these may take some slight comfort from a sentence in a document appended to the Agreement and signed by all its signatories, in which they suggest further measures for future consideration. Among others they suggest that, for the avoidance of waste, through whales being fatally injured but lost, there should be regulation of the methods of killing. Such regulations, they add, "may be expected to abate something of the undoubted cruelty of the present methods of whaling." Here, at length, commerce and humanity, very gingerly, join hands.

JAMES BLAKE

LACK OF SYMPATHY

AT the beginning of the century it was generally thought in the best circles that the world was going soft. To-day it is widely held that the world is becoming more and more callous. How hard-hearted it was of the *Times*, for example, to tell jocularly the story of the Hungarian, Anton Kertesz, and his bees! Kertesz, as you have probably read, is a small farmer who decided to keep bees, and who, finding the bees unproductive, put two swarms of them into milk-jugs, covered the jugs with brown paper, and set off with them by train for Budapest to consult the Department of Agriculture and discover what was the matter. In the course of the journey, unhappily, the bees, which had been placed beneath the seat, made their way through the paper and began to creep up Kertesz's legs. In his terror, he dared not move,

and he appealed to two ladies, who were the only other passengers in the compartment, to move to another compartment as he wished to take off his trousers. He was apparently so inarticulate with fear, and his features were working in so frenzied a fashion that the ladies failed to understand the import of his story and came to the conclusion that he was a madman. Hurriedly leaving the compartment, they spread the exciting news that a lunatic was on the train.

In the meantime, relieved of their presence, Kertesz took off his trousers and shook them out of the window. Little need to say what happened next. What happened was what always happens in stories about people who shake their trousers out of the windows of railway trains. A train swept past in the opposite direction and the trousers were whizzed out of Kertesz's nerveless hands. And, trouserless, he was borne along on his way to Budapest, the conductor having locked the door on him for the safety of the other passengers. On his arrival at Budapest, Kertesz was agreeably surprised when two "burly strangers" came into the compartment, and, professing to be tailors, offered to measure him for a pair of trousers. He was less agreeably surprised when they suddenly seized him, laid him on a stretcher, and tied him to it. The more he protested, the madder he seemed, and, when he was taken to a mental home, the doctors looked on him as a man who was simply normally insane. It was not till three days had passed, indeed, that he was able to convince the doctors that his story about the bees was true and was permitted to return home to go on with his bee-keeping or not, as he chose.

Now that, I contend, is a story that ought to arouse the indignation of every right-minded citizen. When a man or woman is wrongfully arrested in London, and locked in a cell even for a single night, leaders are written in the newspapers about it, questions are asked in Parliament about it, and everybody begins thinking about Magna Charta and asking if we are back in the days of King John again. If a policeman runs you in at two in the morning because he mistakenly believes that the bag you are carrying contains something you have stolen, no one—in print, at least—treats this as a rather good joke. Mistakes that the police make in England are never funny. The mistakes of no officials in England, indeed, are funny. Why, then, should we regard this appalling blunder on the part of Hungarian asylum-attendants and doctors as amusing?

I am afraid that human beings are usually callous about the sufferings of men who have lost their trousers. I certainly never heard a story of lost trousers told with the slightest suggestion of sympathy for the victim. Stories about bees, wasps, and their stings or apprehension of their stings, are for the most part also hard-hearted. I do not know why it is, but, though one would hate to see anybody stung by a bee or wasp, anyone who shows terror of a bee or wasp immediately becomes a comic character. I have seen a strong-minded woman during afternoon tea in a garden swishing wasps away with her handkerchief and always swishing them in the direction of a nervous little man who grew paler and paler as each infuriated wasp swung past his nose; and the alarm of the little man, instead of evoking my sympathy, as it should have done, was, I confess with shame, a pleasure to watch. "You'll only irritate them," he protested to the lady querulously. She looked at him rebukingly and said to him in a deep, almost bass, voice: "The sting of a wasp can be exceedingly painful." That, of course, was what the little man was thinking; but you could see that he was also thinking in the hidden places of his soul that, if the pain must be inflicted, it was better that it should be borne, not by himself, but by the lady. Now, the odd thing is that if the little man had actually been stung, I should have felt sorry for him, even though the sting might have seemed rather funny in retrospect. But the fear—at least, other people's fear—of being stung is nearly always funny. At sight of an entomophobe we all become savages in our sense of humour.

Apart from his lost trousers and his fear of bees, however, the Hungarian farmer appeals to our sense of humour as the victim of an extraordinary mishap. The mishaps of our fellows often awaken our sympathy, but, for some reason that I for one cannot explain, there are a number of mishaps that cause nothing but laughter. Being chased by a bull-dog, for example; that is nearly always amusing to other people, though no one thinks it funny if somebody is chased by an Alsatian. Comic literature could scarcely exist without mishaps. Take away the mishaps of Don Quixote and Mr. Winkle and you take away their characters. And the odd thing is that the mishaps are not the less comic for being extremely painful. Humiliation, blows, and infinite terror all become enjoyable if the mishap is of the right sort. I used to feel indignant when the Black-and-Tans raided the houses of Dublin citizens, but I could not help seeing the joke when they raided and ransacked the house of a passionate Unionist, some practical joker having tricked them into the belief that Michael Collins was in the house. Sir Hamar Greenwood tried to show the House of Commons how funny it was when the Auxiliaries held up a judge and called him an "Irish bastard." I could not quite see the fun of this, but the figure of the outraged Unionist householder, as he watched the gunmen of law and order ransacking his rooms in the small hours, has always seemed to me a comical one.

Another aggrieved man who seems to me comical is the semi-teetotaller who was deposited for the night in an inebriates' home. He was a good man with a dipsomaniac brother, whom he persuaded to go into a home in the hope of a cure. The two men set off by car for the home, which was in the country, and, in the first village they came to, the dipsomaniac suggested that, as he was about to enter upon a long course of abstinence, they might have a last drink together. The good brother weakly consented, and they got out and drank each other's health. Arriving at the next village, the dipsomaniac was equally pressing in the matter of a last drink, and the good brother equally weak and anxious to do the right thing. The same thing happened at village after village, till the dipsomaniac noticed that the good brother, who was not accustomed to much liquor, had become completely drunk while he himself was merely feeling merry. When they arrived at the inebriates' home, the good brother was snoring piggishly and sleeping the sleep of the just blotto. When a man-servant appeared, the dipsomaniac said to him, pointing to his brother: "This is Mr. So-and-so, who is coming here as a patient." "Oh, yes, sir," said the man-servant, "we were expecting him. I had better go and get help to take him to his room." He then went inside and brought out an attendant, and together, with the dipsomaniac joyfully following, they carried the virtuous brother to a bedroom, where a doctor gave him an injection and left him to his dreams. The dipsomaniac shook hands warmly with the doctor, told him that his brother was a sad case, returned to the car, and set off gleefully for a wild night in London.

This story may be fiction, but it was told to me as a true story by a man who professed to have heard it from the dipsomaniac himself.

Whether true or not, it is a story that has its painful side. In so far as we are moralists, I contend, our sympathy with the good brother in his misfortunes ought to be so strong that we should not be amused by the trick the dipsomaniac played on him. Imagine the humiliation of a thoroughly respectable man, intent only on saving the body and soul of the black sheep of the family, when he woke up in the morning and found himself being given an inebriate's breakfast in an inebriate's bed. He could explain much, but how could he satisfactorily explain his condition on the previous evening? Shame, utter shame, must have consumed him as he set out to convince the doctor that he was the sober one of the family. How maddening it must have been to him, as he gabbled out his incredible story, to watch the doctor incredulously nodding assent! How saponaceous the doctor must have seemed to him as, beaming through his glasses, he said with a fat smile: "Well, if I were you, I should stay in bed to-day. I can see

you're a little excited, and I'll send up a little bromide mixture that will make a new man of you."

That, it seems to me, is a situation to make angels weep. But do we weep? No; no more than we weep at the plight of the trouserless Hungarian bee-keeper during his three long days and nights in the mental home. This is one more clear proof that we are not angels. It is possible that, if we were, we should no longer be able to enjoy *Don Quixote* or the *Pickwick Papers*. Y. Y.

Correspondence

LOVE, MARRIAGE AND JEALOUSY

SIR,—May I in turn enter a "strong protest," not against Dr. Roberts' article, but against the tone of Mr. Leckie's letter denouncing it?

Has it ever occurred to Mr. Leckie that the terms he applies to Dr. Roberts' views ("disgracefully low view of marriage," "un-moral," "repulsive," etc.) could, in the opinion of many of your readers, be equally well applied to that rigid attitude towards marriage and the family which Mr. Leckie's letter suggests he maintains? According to this attitude a marriage must for ever be preserved, no matter what a mockery it may become, no matter what misery may be involved, making marriage, in fact, more of a punishment than a sacrament. To risk being painfully obvious, I would remind Mr. Leckie that mere abuse of those with whom we disagree will get us nowhere, nor, for that matter, will sticking our heads in the sand in the way Mr. Leckie, with his "I *refuse* to believe . . ." (that Dr. Roberts' views are held by more than a small minority), seems prepared to do.

Whether or not one agrees with Dr. Roberts' views (and I myself do not agree with all he says) one can surely treat with respect, and discuss calmly, the conclusions of a doctor of such wide experience. When a man sums up his attitude to marriage in these words: "I believe that the only sound foundations for a worthy and continuous marriage are love, true freedom, absolute candour, a complete altruistic and mutual respect, a desire for mutual understanding, and an intellectual, aesthetic and spiritual capacity for attaining to it," as Dr. Roberts does, what does Mr. Leckie, by hurling at him the epithets "un-moral" and "repulsive," do other than reveal the extreme narrowness and intolerance of his own mind?

Finally, as it were to clinch the matter and preclude all further discussion, Mr. Leckie adds: "After all, this is a Christian country." Here one might be content to adopt the American "So what?" But what does Mr. Leckie mean by it, and, whatever he does mean, how does it follow from that that there is nothing more to be said on the matter?

In what sense is this a Christian country? Few pretend to-day that anything more than a minority of the people of this country are active professing Christians. The steady decline of Church attendance, and, in particular, of Sunday Schools, suggests that this minority is becoming ever smaller and smaller. Perhaps, however, having an Established Church, we are all Christians, like the soldiers during the Great War, who, if they professed no particular religious belief, no denominational allegiance, were automatically labelled for Church parade as "C. of E."

In whatever sense Mr. Leckie assumes this is a Christian country, how does it follow from that assumption that no discussion of marriage problems must be allowed?

Even the Archbishops admitted, during the discussions on the Marriage Bill in the House of Lords, that they could not presume to interfere with changes in marriage legislation if desired by a majority of the people, even if they, the Archbishops, could not support them. If Archbishops hesitate to interfere with marriage legislation, who is Mr. Leckie to veto marriage discussion in the NEW STATESMAN AND NATION? A. L. SYMONDS

8, Tremena Road,
St. Austell, Cornwall.

SIR,—The thesis of Dr. Roberts' article on this subject is commonly accepted in private by many of the wise and of the worldly-wise; if it is valid (as we believe it is) its public recognition is important. But it is somewhat obscured by an ambiguity of the English language. Dr. Roberts writes: "Whilst we are 'in love' we are all of us monogamists"; what he means is rather that we are all of us *monophilists*; and the use of this word (which it is one purpose of this letter to present, through your columns, to the English language) is not a pedantry, but sets free for its legitimate use *monogamist*, which at present has to do double duty.

It is Dr. Roberts' thesis that though monophily tends to be monogamous, monogamy need by no means be monophilous. What, positively, monogamy can be is obscured, we believe, when he is led by the ambiguity of his terminology to reject it as for most of the time "for live people the merest convention." It is monophily that is a mere convention, or sometimes, perhaps, a harmless eccentricity; and when it has been dismissed as it deserves, monogamy may be recognised as a relation which for many, perhaps most, people is a satisfying component in life.

It is not, like being in love or like intimate friendship, a simple relation; it has continuity, but not uniformity. The desire and tenderness of lovers, the frankness and stimulus of friends, the concerns and the comforts of a joint household, the difficulties and the delights of rearing children, are all components in it. They cannot all be present simultaneously; but what gives marriage its unity, what constitutes it a relation and not a series of disconnected relations between the same persons, is that present with each one is the memory and the expectation of the others. In particular, we believe that Dr. Roberts was not so much wise as worldly-wise when he suggested that being in love may not reasonably remain an expectation as well as a memory.

After this explanation, Sir, we trust we can subscribe ourselves without fear of misunderstanding. TWO MONOGAMISTS

SIR,—I realise that Mr. Leckie does not share my views or my ideals. That is as it should be. But his penultimate sentence puzzles me a little. He writes: "After all, this is a Christian country, and ideas that strike at the root of marriage and the home are not suitable for your pages." It is the word "Christian" that sets me wondering. I have never thought of Jesus as a good family man or as a zealous defender of the conventional family. Here are some expressions that seem to me to "strike at the root of marriage and the home." Are they also "unsuitable for your pages"?

"I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother." "Then one said unto him, Behold thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to speak with thee. But he answered, Who is my mother? and who are my brethren? And he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples and said, Behold my mother and my brethren." "Everyone that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life"—and so on. Incidentally, *is* this a Christian country? HARRY ROBERTS

Oakshott Hanger,
Hawkley,
Liss, Hants.

TWENTIETH-CENTURY GIRONDINS

SIR,—May I offer you a very humble vote of thanks for the remarks of your contributor "Critic" on the controversy with Brailsford over the execution of the eight Soviet generals? In the guise of an apology for Brailsford, "Critic" has most successfully destroyed him.

(1) He abandons the defence of the authenticity of the "Stalin Memorandum," on which Brailsford has based his entire article. How Brailsford ever came to accept this clumsy imposture is a problem in the psychology of credulity.

(2) He admits that he is satisfied of the "treasonable" role of the generals ("the plot became—I am assured by those who know something of the evidence—treasonable on any definition"). In that case the working-class revolution was obviously justified in taking the necessary measures of self-defence against treason.

(3) He adds a point which is strictly irrelevant, but which happens to be most helpful with regard to Tom Paine and the Girondins as a parallel to the role of Brailsford. This hare is the only excuse for my letter. The fact that in the *Daily Worker* article to which he refers, I was guilty, with the usual vices of hurried journalism, of using an extremely hackneyed quotation from Tom Paine is unimportant; a quotation from that excellent writer, Kipling, does not imply acceptance of imperialism. But the parallel with the Girondins is helpful.

"Critic" finds the role of Brailsford in relation to the Russian Revolution similar to that of Tom Paine in supporting the Girondins against the Jacobins in the French Revolution; and he defines this role of supporting the Girondins (who were in

collaboration with the monarchist counter-revolution and the foreign enemy) as "loyalty to the cause when you believe its leaders are betraying it." Parallels are admittedly of limited value in political questions; but this one is fruitful enough to be worth pursuing a little.

Lenin, as is well known, once described the Bolsheviks as the Jacobins of the proletariat:

> A Jacobin who is inseparably linked with the organisation of the proletariat, who is conscious of its class interests, is a revolutionary social democrat. A Girondin . . . afraid of the dictatorship of the proletariat, and sighing about the absolute value of democratic demands, is an opportunist."—(Lenin, "*One Step Forwards, Two Steps Backwards*, 1904).

Who were the Girondins? They were the representatives of the trading and industrial interests in the French Revolution. They tried to save the monarchy, because they saw in the monarchy the defence of property. They fought the Jacobins in the Convention over the question of the abolition of all feudal burdens without compensation, over the leaving of communal property in the hands of the village communities, over the measures against speculators and profiteers. They opposed every attack upon property; they protested against special capital taxation; they opposed the introduction of the grain tax. Their General Dumouriez went over to the Austrians. It was the treachery of the generals that led to the arrest of the Girondins.

> "You want to know," said the younger Robespierre, "who sounded the alarm on June 2nd (the day when twenty-nine Girondin leaders were arrested)? I will tell you: the treachery of our generals, the breach of faith which surrendered the camp of Famar to the enemy."

The Jacobins were revealed as the necessary defenders of the French Revolution in its fight for life; the Girondins were the traitors to the revolution and allies with the foreign enemy.

But the Jacobins, as the representatives of the revolutionary petty bourgeoisie, could realise no independent ideal; in the social stage then reached they could only prepare the way for the rule of the bourgeoisie and then pass from the scene when they had done their work.

The successors of the revolutionary Jacobin traditions to-day, the Bolsheviks, based on the new social class, the proletariat, which holds the future in its hands, are able to build the new social order, and have already done so in the Soviet Union. Therein Bolshevism and the future of Bolshevism differs basically from Jacobinism.

But the successors of the Girondins, those who in the name of "liberal-democratic" ideals oppose the necessary "Jacobin" revolutionary measures of Bolshevism, become thereby inevitably at the present day, however high-minded their intentions, representatives and allies of the old dying social order against the new, enemies of the revolution (not "loyal" to it, as your contributor seems to think). "Critic" is incorrect when he states that Brailsford has always been "a good friend to the revolutionary working class and to the U.S.S.R. in the past." One of the earliest political controversies I had the pleasure of taking part in was against Brailsford in December, 1917, for his attacks on the Bolshevik Revolution. As I reminded readers in my article, Brailsford attacked the Bolshevik Revolution in its early days in much the same terms as to-day, denounced the Bolsheviks as traitors to international socialism, and denounced Lenin for his dissolution of the Constituent Assembly. In general, it will be found that those who denounce Stalin to-day (bourgeois press, Independent Labour Party, Liberals, etc.) are much the same as those who denounced Lenin while Lenin lived (bourgeois press, Independent Labour Party, Liberals, etc.). Since then they have found that Lenin was a great man. No doubt in fifty years time, if their type survives till then, they will be vowing their unalterable loyalty to the great revolutionary traditions of Stalin which are being so shamefully betrayed by his successors. Neither then did they understand nor do they understand to-day the role of the revolutionary working-class party and its leaders.

It is to be hoped that in the present serious situation thoughtful Liberals will be on guard against the old "Girondin" traditions which bring them into the camp of reaction. Brailsford's great services in the cause of Spain, where the issue is still the issue of the democratic Republic, are recognised and admired by all. There is no question of the high-minded idealism which impels him even when he attacks the Soviet Union. But it is just this high-minded idealism, when not accompanied by political consciousness of real class forces, which can become (witness Lansbury) grist to the mill of the Edens and the Hitlers. A very earnest appeal needs to be made to all Liberals to open their eyes to the very serious realities of the gathering world struggle, to which the Soviet trials should have helped to awaken us all.

7 John Street, W.C.1. R. PALME DUTT

[Critic writes: (1) Mr. Dutt spoils an interesting bit of history by a quite unworthy attack on Brailsford who no doubt will reply next week. If Brailsford, who incidentally wrote what the Webbs call the best "pictures known to us of the life of the U.S.S.R.," is not a good friend of the working class, it has none. (2) The Paine discussion is irrelevant. As Mr. Dutt knows, I only took up Paine's example to illustrate a simple point that a man is not to be called a traitor because, in the interests of the ideals for which a revolution is made, he criticises those who come to the top after the revolution. (3) Much more important. I pointed out that the Stalin Memorandum (which I take to be an authentic document sent in the interests of the U.S.S.R. to a friendly government) was certainly not what Mr. Dutt called it, a Fascist forgery. Mr. Dutt avoids the point and has avoided it in his long articles on the subject in the *Daily Worker*. Brailsford was right to protest against the Voroshilov document which represented Tukhachevsky and the other generals as common traitors, selling their country to the enemy. I don't believe anything of the kind and I do not believe Mr. Dutt does either. It is the vice of dictatorship that there is, as I said, no definite line between a difference of policy and treason and no way of pressing one's policy except by plotting against the head of the State.—ED. N.S. & N.]

LONDON MATRICULATION

SIR,—Mr. Lees-Smith's contention, voiced in the Education Debate on June 14th, was that London University alone obstructed the "reform" he advocated (namely that matriculation should be restricted to actual entrants to the University), because the University "received from this examination very large fees which it was unwilling to release." I gave in your journal figures which demonstrated that the nominal profit to the University from the (voluntary) Matriculation as compared with the (compulsory) School Certificate Examination did not exceed 7*s.* 6*d.* per head, and that this meagre profit was wiped out by the extra cost of the Matriculation. The "very large fees" exist only in Mr. Lees-Smith's imagination; his major premise being thus demolished his conclusion must suffer rout, and I am content to leave it at that.

The real obstacle to withdrawal of Matriculation from the school is, as I said in the debate, the exceptional and apparently impregnable prestige of the "London matric." with parents, pupils and above all with prospective employers. There are historical and other substantial reasons for this prestige. I submit with confidence that the London Matriculation has done more than any other single cause to raise the standard of our secondary school education in the last fifty years. Its insistence upon the English language and mathematics as compulsory subjects created a revolution in teaching. It became widely accepted as an assurance of sound general education giving entrance without question to all the learned professions and regarded as the coping-stone of school achievement even when a University career was not contemplated. But far from pressing this examination upon the schools the University, as I explained, has recently endeavoured to discourage the taking of matriculation by other than genuine University students by the device of more than doubling the previous fee to those whose education ended with that examination. Your anonymous correspondents, with a suspiciousness worthy of Stalin, detect in this quite honest experiment, the effect of which it is too early yet to estimate, a "conspiracy" to reserve Matriculation to the relatively well-to-do child. This is surely a peculiarly perverse charge to make against London University, which was founded and has been consistently maintained to furnish higher education to the relatively poor man denied this opportunity by the older residential universities.

Your anonymous correspondents assume with truly dictatorial complacency, again worthy of Stalin, that if the Matriculation were withdrawn from the schools employers would be "compelled" to accept whatever standard the School Certificate Examination might finally adopt when untrammelled by competition with the Matriculation. I am confident that in our free country this assumption is fallacious and that chaos would come to the schools if that competition were removed.

I do not know what local fees are charged by individual schools upon admission of students, but the only additional fee which University regulations exact upon entrance from matriculated students is the registration fee of 10*s.*, payable by External students only, as a result of the new statutes, for which Mr. Lees-Smith himself bears some personal responsibility, and which require

all External students to be registered. This operation entails considerable charges on the University and is properly met with a moderate fee. It has been levied only since the new constitution came into operation in 1929. Registration has already proved a boon to individual students, especially those whom poverty or other causes may prevent from obtaining any assistance in their studies, for it has enabled the External Council to become aware of and to offer help to such students. That the charge has not acted as a deterrent is evident from the fact that in the last year for which a record exists, 1935, 12,800 External students were thus registered, to which must be added large numbers from Overseas.

In the last paragraph of their letter your anonymous correspondents ("Thirteen London Graduates") suggest that there is increasing "distrust of those who now direct the University's policy." In May last three senior members of the Senate, representing graduates in Science, sought re-election after periods of service, the shortest of which was eleven years, the longest more than thirty years. Here, if ever, was an opportunity afforded to graduates for evincing "distrust." The three members secured re-election with polls, 1,817, 1,764 and 1,762 respectively; their opponents scored only 512 and 400 votes respectively. The "distrust" which your correspondents report as existing would seem to have been successfully concealed on this occasion.

House of Commons. E. GRAHAM-LITTLE
Chairman of the External Council,
London University.

SIR,—The Member of Parliament for the University of London distorts the issue with less than his usual skill.

There are two distinct "Matriculations" for the University of London. To the one examination any person above the qualifying age, who can pay the fees and present a certificate of good moral standing, can be admitted. What deformation of good learning that "external" examination may produce is not now in question.

The other concerns the pupils of the Secondary Schools only, and is the concern of all the bright pupils within the "province" of the University of London. The distortion produced by the examiners' implicit claim to dictate just what paper-stuff shall be treated, and how it shall be crammed to meet the limitations of their paper-traditions, is the criminal affair now up for judgment.

Sir Ernest Graham Little tries to ride off by a trick of nomenclature. In the official jargon this University examination is disguised as a "General School" examination, and the certificate as the "General Schools" certificate. But the University applies pressure to the pupils in subtle fashion. It announces that "credits" in specified subjects will qualify for a "matriculation exemption." Consequently, for teachers, pupils, parents, and for the few prospective employers concerned, this examination becomes *the* Matriculation. I should be sorry for the person who submitted to a banking or insurance firm the certificate of "external" matriculation when applying for a junior post. And still more sorry for a Secondary School pupil who submitted a "school" certificate which hadn't those "matriculation credits."

The pupil who obtains that credit certificate *has* matriculated, as soon as he reaches the age of 16, and has paid the £2 which the University now exacts.

This is the examination, this the distortion, and this the fee-game to which Mr. Lees-Smith objects. And on this issue enlightened teachers have protested for many years past. For "success" in *this* matriculation, the pupils have to be subjected, from the age of 14 years, to two years of intensive cram on matter carefully restricted to such stuff as examiners can readily "assess" by their restricted paper-judgment.

Whenever these teachers have demanded release from this pressure on their best pupils, the responsible authorities of the University of London have protested that they must maintain the severity of this matriculation, in order to keep it "equivalent" to that other, the "external" matriculation designed for folk of mature age, and quite often taken by graduates of other universities.

It will not serve for Sir E. Graham Little to protest that pupils need only be submitted to the General Schools part of this double-purpose cash-down test. Nor for the Board of Education. So long as the University exacts fees for the examination, and for the matriculation certificate itself, it is responsible for the pressure which that certificate and that examination imposes. And so long as the Board of Education requires the submission of pupils to this test, pays a moiety of the fees, and assesses the schools by the proportion of "successes," so long is the Board consenting to this death process.

The abolition of *this* matriculation is Mr. Lees-Smith's first demand. I trust that teachers will go on to demand release from any sort of school examination conducted by the University of London's special Boards. It is clear that the main interest is fee-revenue, and not the welfare and training of the pupils.

Meanwhile, I challenge Sir E. Graham Little to disclose the magnitude of this industry, by stating the amount of revenue obtained in fees from this double-barrelled examination. To indicate the severity of the ordeal he might also advise us as to how many pupils have to be re-submitted, at a subsequent examination, paying a further tax, in order to obtain these "matriculation credits." W. E. M. LLEWELLYN

IDEALLY HUMAN

SIR,—In your "This England" column of last week you print the following :—

> The Rev. R. Sorensen, M.P., referring to His Majesty, repudiated that he was above ordinary human beings, or was in the nature of a god. Fortunately, most Britishers are proud to agree that King George VI is ideally human.—*Express and Independent.*

Some one ought to be more careful. The first sentence is mine, but the second is a comment by the newspaper itself. Personally, I have no knowledge of King George VI beyond a brief contact at a certain function and therefore I will reserve my estimate of his virtues until the sweet by and by.

Meanwhile, the local Editor may explain to me his own standards of judgment concerning the "ideally human" and you, Sir, release me from the pillory. REGINALD SORENSEN

38, Woodside Park Avenue,
Walthamstow, E.17.

[The cutting gave no indication that the second sentence was not also Mr. Sorensen's. We printed the paragraph exactly as it stood.—ED. N.S. & N.]

ALFRED STEVENS

SIR,—I am preparing the material for a study of the life and work of Alfred Stevens, the English sculptor and painter, and should be glad to hear of any works, letters or other material pertinent to the subject.

All letters and MSS. will be copied and returned at once, and a catalogue in acknowledgment of all sources of information will be published. KENNEDY ROMNEY TOWNDROW

Threals Lane Studio,
West Chiltington Common, Sussex.

MILK OR PATENT MEDICINES?

SIR,—I understand that, in spite of the concentrated advertising campaign of the Milk Marketing Board, the consumption of milk per head of the population has increased only very slightly.

One of the reasons for this small increase is the fact that the poorest members of the community cannot afford it.

It would be interesting to discover how much money the C class population—numbering about 30 million—spends annually on patent medicines. The sum must run into many millions. If even half this sum were spent on milk instead of remedies of doubtful value, the health of the nation would improve considerably.

Is it not time that a stop was put to the patent medicine racket? According to the *Statistical Review*, just under £700,000 was spent during January, February and March, 1937, on press advertising alone on various Pills, Laxatives, and Indigestion, Cough, Cold and Rheumatism cures. This does not take into account money spent on radio advertising, house-to-house distribution of samples, posters, leaflets, etc.

Although the winter is the chief time of the year for such advertising, the total annual expenditure cannot be far short of four million pounds. Undoubtedly some of the remedies are sound and efficient. At the same time, it is obvious that the majority of these medicines cannot achieve all the things they claim to do.

On June 15th, at an Advertising Convention at Brighton, the advertising manager of a large group of magazines said : "Thirteen years ago we adopted the slogan, 'Truth in Advertising.' That slogan was shouted from the house-tops of those whose profession or business lies in the demands of advertising, and it is pertinent to ask if, since then, we have progressed far towards the goal expressed in the slogan. I am afraid that we must confess we have not. Blatancy, exaggeration and false claims still prevail."

From time immemorial the public has been gulled by the quack

—but that is no reason why it should continue to be. Responsible advertising agents should take a lead in insisting that their clients modify their claims. Newspapers and magazines should adopt a far stricter censorship, and educational authorities should make more strenuous efforts to teach the public that it is far wiser to spend money on preventing illness than to waste it on patent medicines.

The health of the nation is surely of far greater importance than the fortune of a few dozen manufacturers.

Sackville House, 40 Piccadilly, London, W.1. H. LLEWELLYN MORGAN

Miscellany

WAITING FOR THE NEW

"WIR müssen auf den Neuen warten" ("We must wait for the New"). One might have thought, from the fervour of his tone, that he was speaking of a new Messiah had he not, as he said the words, standing outside the leafy open window, jerked his head towards the green mountains, still striped at the summit with patches of shimmering snow.

Often in winter, after a great snowfall, the skier looks out of his window at night, and seeing a clear sky pictures to himself the virgin, untracked slopes that await him in the morning. And so great is his longing to see spread out below him the unspoiled slopes, to lay the first track, that a whole night, even though spent in unconsciousness, seems an intolerable time to wait. And what of the summer, when he must spend not a few unconscious hours but half a year of long-dayed months waiting for the New?

But the truth is that for the skier time does not count. Waiting is waiting, whether it be for a night or for six months; and inversely the prospect of a ski-run is as exciting, day after day, to the rentier or pensioner who spends Michaelmas to May Day on the snow, as to the breadwinner who snatches a fortnight at Christmas. Each, on waking, thrills at the thought "to-day I am going to ski"; each has sat for hours in heavy and perhaps wet ski-ing boots, merely to put off the moment when he must confess to himself "to-day's ski-ing is over." As for the great wrench, the loosening of the bindings and stepping out of the skis for the last time, the holiday-skier's great pang—the man of leisure will do all in his power to avoid it. He lingers where there are still streaks of white above the tree-line, or near glaciers that can still be skied upon at three in the morning or nine at night; he will not oil his skis or pack them away. The season is not over; there is a ski meeting on the Glockner in June, at the Jungfrau in July.

Meanwhile thick grass and leisurely buttercups cover the slopes where in winter-time split seconds were disputed. Beyond these slopes were once mountains, cornices, avalanches, blizzards; now there are only dwarfish green hills, tinged here and there with a mist of blue or yellow flowers. And if the gentian, the primulus, the soldanella, the snow-anemones in all their glory were suddenly blotted out by a metre of powder snow, no skier, even though he were also a great lover of flowers, would for an instant mourn. It is an obsession, a madness. Can there be any other sport that has such a hold? Does the fisherman lay down his rod with such a pang? This at least the skier has in common with the fisherman, that he is never tired of talking about his sport, never grows weary indeed of going over and over again through all the familiar stages of the same conversation. "The Telemark turn still has its uses," "Funiculars have ruined ski-ing," "Steel edges are dangerous for beginners." And when there is no one to talk to, the skier does runs in his head, holds triumphantly the "Schuss" he has never quite ventured, changes the snow at will from the pillows and billows of January powder to the day-dream pliancy of "Firn" or the glinting steel of early-morning glacier snow. Of the New, lying lightly on hummocks of shale and over the brown autumn grass, he banishes all thought. It is far away; not months only, but manifold contingencies—wars, sickness, penury lie between. ARTHUR WALEY

MUSIC, WORDS AND ACTION

THE relations between music and words and music and action, offer many problems and one becomes particularly conscious of them after hearing and seeing the various solutions which a repertory of opera such as has just been concluded at Covent Garden and Glyndebourne offers. The ballets which Col. W. de Basil's superb Russian company is now giving at Covent Garden add more material and new aspects to this problem on which I wish to offer a few remarks.

After a long experience of opera, I have come to the conclusion that the libretto or text of an opera has three aspects which must not be confused. These three aspects may be stated thus:

(1) The plot or action supplied.
(2) The genius of the language.
(3) The verbal expression or "poetry."

For a composer of opera, aspects 1 and 2 are all-important, whereas nothing valuable or even useful can be contributed to his opera by the talent of the writer of the libretto in respect of the third element. Mozart declared emphatically that rhyming and the flowers of speech were not only unwanted by him but were actually a nuisance. No musician, and I would venture also to say no poet, could think otherwise. When a poet or a musician takes a story, an action, a thought, or anything which we may call an "idea" as a starting point for a work he gives it an expression, a special materialisation by words or music respectively. Now this cannot be done simultaneously by the poet and the musician for the simple reason that each is using sounds and rhythms, and if the poet has created his expression in sound and rhythm it can only clash with that which the musician creates. Each must get in the other's way. For a poet and a composer to write the same dramatic work in words and music is comparable to two different painters painting a picture on one canvas. Such a collaboration is only possible in painting if each is restricted to a particular element in the picture. For example, one may paint the landscape and the other the figures, or one may do the drawing and the other supply the colour. There have been such paintings, but I doubt if they can ever be classed among the great paintings of the world.

In opera, what happens is absolutely clear: either the writer denies himself as a poet and confines his work to supplying a dramatic or lyrical or fantastic action, or, if he does not, then if the composer happens to be a man of genius he will use the action supplied and completely obliterate the verse with his music. Mozart does this and even Gluck, who pretended to put the drama before the music, also does it. Actually, what Gluck meant was that the music should be expressive and fit the dramatic situation; he never suggested that the music should be sacrificed to the *words*. How could he? Where there is poetry music is superfluous and, vice-versa, where there is music poetry is superfluous!

To such an absolute extent is this true that I would go so far as to say that one cannot get the whole musical expression of a great composer like Mozart if one can understand *all* the words that are being sung. To put it differently, an opera which is a great musical work makes its fullest effect when we do not understand the language in which it is being sung. Now this will sound ridiculous to non-musical people or to people whose musical faculty is rudimentary, but I am certain that it is correct. Take such a supreme masterpiece as *Cosi fan Tutte*. There has never lived a poet who could have fitted appropriate words to this music of Mozart's. If such a poet had ever lived and had written the verbal equivalent of *Cosi fan Tutte* he would have been one of the greatest masters of language in the history of the world's literature. All we need

to know when hearing *Cosi fan Tutte* is the general situation which can be and is given in the summary of the plot printed in the programme. More than this is a positive disadvantage, and that is why *Cosi fan Tutte* when performed in English to an English audience invariably loses in effect. The attention of the audience is divided between following the meaning of the words and the expression of the music and this division of attention becomes positive torture when the discrepancy between the words and the music becomes—as it constantly does—so extreme as to give one a physical pain. This, by the way, also explains why Mozart's Italian operas have never been adequately appreciated in Italy where—except for profoundly musical minds of great musicians like Verdi which can disassociate them—the music is dragged down to the level of the words. If one objects to me that Mozart's German operas, on the other hand, have been appreciated fully in Germany, I reply firstly that the Germans are on the whole more profoundly musical than the Italians and, secondly, that the Germans are, relatively speaking, rather insensitive to poetry and are affected more by ideas than by words—or what we might call verbal music.

Now, on the other hand, what goes perfectly with music is action. Action separated from words and joined to music has produced the art of the ballet, and listening to Massine's superb ballet *Choreartium* the other night at Covent Garden, I realised once again how completely action can be married to music. There is hardly a single gesture which in this ballet interferes with the musician's appreciation of the music. An even greater example, however, is Gluck's *Orphée*. The scene in the Elysian fields in this opera is for the most part wordless, but the combination of the maidens visibly playing in the Elysian fields with this sublime music of Gluck's makes for one of the greatest experiences one can have in a theatre. If there is any clash between action and music it is the fault of the choreographer, it is not a fault inherent in the nature of the collaboration as it is in the case of words. The choreographer is free to express all he can, to do his utmost with his art of choreography when collaborating with a composer. Not so the poet. The poet must eschew rigidly the slightest attempt to write poetry. He can only write a dramatically and rationally relevant text. The *art* of poetry lies outside. I shall elaborate this theme a little more in my next article, taking for my subject the recent readings of poetry with music given at the B.B.C. under the direction of Mr. W. B. Yeats.

W. J. TURNER

MATISSE

Henri-Matisse at Rosenberg and Helft's

As I walked away from this exhibition, the window-panes in the Mayfair houses, the railings of balconies and of squares leapt out to meet my eye—the town was all checks and stripes, while the people in it were rippled like climbing plants or little waves. The buses were red and yellow patches among the green of the Park and the blue and grey of the sky. London was momentarily a painting by Matisse. There are twenty pictures, all made during the last year or so, and some forty drawings admirably displayed at Messrs. Rosenberg and Helft's: they are particularly difficult to write about, for Matisse is a very unliterary artist. He paints women and flowers and furniture and clothes—landscapes, too, but there are none here—and he paints them as coloured shapes without seeming to discriminate between a flower's eye and a girl's, between a chair's arms and an odalisque. He makes no extraneous comments, he reflects nothing of the current turmoil and anguish, he makes pictures as the Persians used to make carpets, as Bach used to make fugues. The only argument is that one part of a pattern must be answered with another. But just as Bach is noble in his formality, Matisse is enchanting. And if you must have a moral, all you can draw from these pictures is that life is packed with delightful surprises. In the future Utopia when we are all healthy and wealthy and wise, when we all have leisure and are trained in its use, these pictures, which bigots may now dismiss as irrelevant, will remain, an exciting, subtle, unimpoverished provender of delight.

The first thing that strikes you as you look at the show is that Matisse is already an Old Master. These works are as assured as an Uccello, a Veronese or a Tiepolo. Next you notice that Matisse, aged 67, is like almost all good painters perpetually rejuvenated and improving. His pictures usually are composed of two dissonances which correct one another—a couple of pinks which have never previously been mated singing in parts with an equally improbable pair of greens. Sometimes the complication of the colour-scheme becomes as difficult to follow as Schönberg's music, as in the *Femme à la Robe Violette et aux Anémones* in this show. But in several of his new pictures the master of aquamarines and mauves and terra-cottas has begun composing in the primary colours. The *Collier d'Ambre* is the best example: the resonance of this picture is extraordinary. The *Grande Robe Bleue Fond Noir* is more doubtful—I feel myself a disparity between the subject and the treatment, and should like the picture better as an abstract design. The most immediately impressive painting here is the *Tête Ocre*, the most charming is the *Nu à l'Echarpe*, and after looking at the collection for over an hour, I thought that the best of all was the *Corsage Roumain Manches vertes*. But numbers 4, 5, 7, 9 and 16 are all extraordinary.

Matisse is the most original and inventive colourist in the history of painting. He is also a marvellously agile draughtsman with a line like a bird's flight, the fall of a leaf, or a flag dancing in the wind. These drawings make one think of a swallow-dive, a cadenza played by Heifetz a racing cutter heeling beneath a breeze. (Look especially at 52 and 38, 45, 29, 30 and the fascinating series of reflected nudes, with the head of the artist enmeshed among them.) There is no direct modelling in these line-drawings, but the third dimension is very apparent. In the paintings, on the other hand, although the relative positions of the object are made clear, the composition is kept as close to the surface as possible, as in the most slightly incised bas-relief.

Matisse has on occasion used a very rich texture of paint—the *Femme Nue Sur Fond Bleu* has some brushwork very lovely in itself—but in most of these pictures the *matière* is deliberately rather plain. There is a variation in the thickness of the pigment, but no undertones of a different colour and little elaboration in the direction or shape of the strokes. The wrong end of the brush has been very freely used, and the white canvas thus made to play its part. One cannot help fearing that this exhibition will be reflected in next year's London Group. No painter is more dangerous to imitate than Matisse, for all his simplifications and eliminations proceed from a profound science. The apparent spontaneity is the result of innumerable experiments, the apparent carelessness is that of a juggler on a tight-rope.

Despite the luxuriance of his colour and the Oriental quality of his drawing, Matisse is the antithesis of a romantic artist. He never shows a glimmer of personal interest in his models, his nudes are less sensual than his flowers—these works are so little confessions that you may think them alarmingly inhuman. Superficially capricious, they result from a tremulous sensibility allied to a very orderly, very French mind. Indeed there is something in Matisse of Browning's Andrea del Sarto, "the Faultless Painter." But he gives us exquisitely and incomparably "le vierge, le vivace et le bel aujourd'hui." Is not that enough?

RAYMOND MORTIMER

PLAYS AND PICTURES

"No Sleep for the Wicked," at Daly's

This play is *scuola di* Sapper. The hero pretends to be a silly ass, but is really a British Secret Agent. He goes about his job with incredible clumsiness, and is saved only by his sex-appeal, which overwhelms a female spy on the other side. But he is already married to a repulsively nice woman, and the spy goes

out alone into the night. Mr. Peter Haddon is appropriately exasperating as the hero and Miss Claire Luce is ostentatiously spy-like. In her more rapid speeches she forgets her Russo-Swedish accent and relapses into American, but as a slinker she is unparagoned. The best performance was given by Emilio Cargher as a Moor. The usual ingredients are well mixed, and the play is quite good fun. The hideous vulgarity of the English characters is so well hit off that perhaps the author really has his tongue in his cheek. And the show can be recommended to the sophisticated Sapper-fan, as well as to those parents who consider that, as a subject for the young, murder is greatly preferable to adultery.

"Uday Shan-Kar," at the Gaiety

There is one more week left of the season of Uday Shan-Kar's company of Indian Dancers and Musicians at the Gaiety, and those who are willing to extend their interest in ballet beyond their now familiar favourites at Covent Garden and Sadler's Wells are urged not to miss this impressive and strangely beautiful entertainment. Too much emphasis need not be laid on its strangeness, for many of the legends danced and mimed by these artists make an effect of choreographic completeness comparable, even to the uninstructed eye, with the masterpieces of Russian ballet. It is true that we are never certain, especially in the smaller dances, that the complex traditional symbolism of movement and gesture is arousing in us quite the intended emotion: for example, the dance in which Shan-Kar is said to be flirting with two girls suggested rather a witty and elegant joint flirtation with the audience. But it is impossible to suppose that the delight and emotion inspired by the more complex creations (the Sword Festival Dance, the dramatic ballet of the god Shiva, and above all "Rasa Leela") can be wholly beside the point. "Rasa Leela," an episode of Krishna's youth, cast over the audience the spell of pure poetry, distilled from a hundred subtleties of music and gesture, robes of memorable charm, and the beautifully restrained use of facial expression. Not the least interesting moment in the evening was a performance of exquisite virtuosity by Shirali upon the *Tabla*, a dozen or so little drums each tuned to a definite pitch. The whole company appears to be rooted in the purest traditions of Indian music and dance, and it is difficult to see any limits to the choreographic beauty which it may produce, though one cannot tell what concessions may have been made to Western taste. To rescue and develop these traditions, which have been declining for some two hundred years, Shan-Kar proposes to establish a school at Benares, of which full details may be obtained from Dartington Hall.

"Ballets Russes," at Covent Garden

Col. W. de Basil's Russian company, after giving effective aid in the operas *Orphée* and *Prince Igor*, has now begun its proper season at Covent Garden. The performances of *Aurora's Wedding* and *La Boutique Fantasque* showed that the company is not merely resting on its past reputation, for they were equal to any previously given by this company. The revival of the delightful Scarlatti ballet, *Les Femmes de Bonne Humeur*, was exceptionally brilliant, and was danced with an unflagging spirit and virtuosity with Danilova in her very best style as the maid. The dancers seemed inspired by the vitality of the orchestral playing under Antal Dorati. The musical side of de Basil company's performances has in the past been sometimes weak, but this season it shows a great improvement. As the Miller's Wife in *Le Tricorne*, Tchernicheva takes the place this season of Toumanova; she has more dignity, a more mature style, but lacks the dash of the young Caucasian. The revived *Symphonie Fantastique* is improved in some details, notably in the last movement. It is one of Massine's triumphs.

Lithographs by Vuillard, Bonnard and Lautrec; water-colours by Suddaby, at the Redfern Gallery. Benois at Tooth's

People who used to buy pictures at Burlington House now more usually buy motor-cars, the merits of which they are better fitted to judge. But a larger and less opulent class, who can afford occasionally to spend twenty pounds on a picture, and who seriously care for painting, keep a number of small galleries going, and the dealers are active in finding promising colts and encouraging the modest collector. Consequently, it is increasingly difficult to keep track of all the current exhibitions. But here are two shows which should not be missed. The lithographs at the Redfern Gallery are by Vuillard, Bonnard and Toulouse-Lautrec: they cost ten guineas, or thereabouts, and are very covetable. The Vuillards are particularly enchanting in colour, the Bonnards are more uneven, the Lautrecs (which are in black and white) show his astonishing incisiveness in portraiture. The next room has a covey of water-colours by Mr. Suddaby which we can only deplore. He is exploiting a genuine talent with reckless prodigality, tumbling into a fluent formula, and using his brush instead of his eyes.

The Benois exhibition at Tooth's is a retrospect of the work of one of the greatest theatrical designers. Judged merely as pictures these designs would not be extraordinary, but they are the work of a man profoundly intimate with his medium—the stage, and his virtuosity places him in the great line of the Bibienas. His *Petroushka* is one of the best decors it has been our luck to see, and stands untarnished by time. Benois's feeling for period is acute and has never been surpassed. The costume-sketches are particularly charming and often have intrinsic value.

THE COMING WEEK

SATURDAY, July 10th—
- League of Arts: "L'Enfant Prodigue" and "The Blue Peter," by members of the Vic-Wells Opera Co., Hyde Park, 3 and 7.
- Festival for Children of All Ages in aid of Refugee Children from Spain, "Stonelands," West Hoathly, Sussex, 2–9.

SUNDAY, July 11th—
- S. K. Ratcliffe on "Divorce—Church and People," Conway Hall, 11.

MONDAY, July 12th—
- Spanish Youth Foodship Campaign Meeting. Speakers: Wilfrid Roberts and J. Langdon-Davies. Finsbury Town Hall. 8.
- R. Robertus on "Is Materialism Waning?" 39 Doughty St., 8.30.
- O.U.D.S. Season, Arts.
- "The Petrified Forest," Everyman.

TUESDAY, July 13th—
- Dr. Robert E. Hume on "The Ideals of Peace in the Religions of the World," Friends House, 1.20.

THURSDAY, July 15th—
- Women's Freedom League Meeting: Presentation to Mrs. Despard, Caxton Hall, 7.
- "St. Moritz," Coliseum.

A certain kind of fish

blushes a deep red under the stress of emotion . . . . . The okapi can wipe its eyes with its tongue . . . . Wild lions live largely on zebra meat, but captive lions refuse it . . .

Go round in the company of that famous broadcaster, the "Zoo Man," and enjoy some more of these curiosities of nature. His newest book, *The Zoo Man Speaking*, is full of good stories about animals tame and wild, British and foreign, fur, feather and fin. Adults as well as children, for whom the book is properly designed, will like the author's simple, unsentimental style. Wonderful value as usual.

The Zoo Man Speaking, by David Seth-Smith, F.Z.S., with 30 photographs by the author and many text illustrations by L. R. Brightwell. 5/- net.

NELSON

35 PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON, E.C.4

Current Literature

BOOKS IN GENERAL

A LITERARY critic need not concern himself with the buried psychological motives which have led to the writing of a book, or which make it popular. To do so is dangerous, since after losing sight of a masterpiece he is only too likely to find himself with a very ordinary set of motives on his hands. The significance of the symbolism in Ibsen's *The Master Builder* is a case in point. It is obvious and, once seen, interferes with one's pleasure until a great performance, such as we saw at Cambridge, enables one to forget it. There are certain classes of books in which the psychological motives of the authors are buried under so light a sprinkling of sand that it is difficult to turn a blind eye on them. But the careful critic will avoid rather than seek the opportunity to expose them; remembering that he is concerned with books and not with their authors, with results and not with causes. The proof of the pudding is in the eating, and the pleasure of reading *Lavengro* or *Jane Eyre*, and their merits, are entirely unaffected by the self-idealisation of their respective authors. When the book is good who cares what cat can be seen scratching its way out of the bag? And if one doesn't care when the book is good it seems scarcely consistent to care so much when the book is bad. Yet one cannot help smiling when clean-living men in smoking carriages recommend *The Blue Lagoon*. The plot of this pre-war best-seller is that of a more primitive *Daphnis and Chloe*. The boy and girl grow up from early infancy alone on a tropical island and discover the idyllic facts of life idyllically and enjoy an idyll. Which is all so very different from what happens at public schools. One would have to be a very ill-natured enemy of the human race to grudge it *The Blue Lagoon*. On the other hand, I confess that the motives which make people read crime stories (I suppose them always written for money) strike me as low. We all have a streak of the bloodhound in us and are ready to take advantage of the law as an excuse to hunt human beings. The really extraordinary obsession of civilised people with crime is not because society is in any danger from criminals. At the best they feel for the criminal very much what the hunting farmer feels for the fox, or for the rarer birds of prey: that life would be dull without them.

* * *

The form of fiction which is called animal biography is a peculiar mixture which is very popular in England. It has something in common with the crime story. In both the hero is a hunted creature, to whose actions moral laws are not really applicable, while nature's "law" of self-preservation is exalted although nobody has ever felt edified after watching this law in action. More attractive than the criminal, the animal hero is the goat-legged god, free from man's exaggerated restraints and hypertrophied desires:

> Pale days and a league of laws
> Made by the whims of men.
> Would I were back with my furry cubs
> In the dusk of a jungle den.

Many an Englishwoman, wearily struggling through the summer sales, must have echoed these sentiments of Laurence Hope's. I read practically all the animal biographies written before 1914, as well as a good many of their successors, and certain features are almost invariable. First: the animal hero is distinguished from the rest of his species from birth. He is always larger, cleverer, or has five toes. (Or do I mean six?) Secondly, although the attraction of the tale is that of Pan fluting among the reedbeds, its thrill is that of the final martyrdom. Shaggy, plumed, or scaly, the noble hero is almost always betrayed; encompassed by steel traps, surrounded by a ring of enemies and tortured to death. The harrowed reader licks his lips, thrilled by watching another of "Nature's laws" in operation.

While the hero of the animal story is usually a faked figure, the incarnation of a wish-fulfilment, the background is usually good. For while the author and the readers of a crime story love nobody and care only for excitement, the author and (ideal) readers of the animal story are naturalists with a feeling for natural beauty and a love and understanding of all kinds of living creatures. Thus in the best animal biographies, the hero is reduced to a mere thread on which is strung the record of the author's first-hand observations. Thus the inherent falsity of the animal story—which pretends to be realistic, while describing an animal in terms of human consciousness—is reduced to the minimum. Such is the form of *The Hill Fox*, by Ernest Lewis (Constable, 7*s.* 6*d.*), whose other books I have missed. They are *The High-mettled Racer* and two books about dogs. Lewis, who died this year at the age of 29, had obviously a real passion for animals of every sort. He spent four years working in a racing stables at Newmarket, and though he had only one arm, hunted regularly and had a complete understanding of hunting technique. The love of the hunting man for the fox is often mocked at, but with injustice. The fox spends its life hunting and its love of killing is at least as great as that of the huntsman. They have tastes in common. It is at any rate clear that Lewis loved foxes and spent a great deal of time watching them as well as every other sort of wild animal and bird, and that he made the most of exceptional opportunities. The book is remarkably free from the falsities of the ordinary animal biography and has a delightful first-hand freshness. Again and again the author abandons his hero, the grey Highland fox, to describe some scene which he has witnessed himself.

* * *

Part One deals with a fox's life in the north Highlands, close to the rocky sea-coast and cliffs, which are a breeding ground for sea-birds. The narrative is interrupted here by accounts of seals, skuas and gulls. The description of the seals resting calmly in a raging sea breaking on the rocks during a furious gale is given in a few lines and is admirable. So is the clear account of a shepherd working a good dog so as to get him to bring down unseen sheep on the mountain above him, of stalking deer and hawking grouse with a peregrine waiting on while a dog puts them up on the moor. I think it is clear that Lewis's interest in blood-sports grew out of his sympathy with dogs and birds and the wish to work with them and share their forms of hunting. Having only one arm, he was probably debarred from shooting: and perhaps had an antipathy to it, for he says nothing about it. Hunts in the Midlands and the south of England often replenish their supply of foxes, or introduce new blood by buying them from the wilder districts where foxes are a nuisance. Mr. Lewis makes this happen to his hero, who is dug out, bagged and sent to Dorsetshire.

* * *

Part Two describes almost every kind of hunting with hounds, and all sorts of unusual incidents which sound authentic. None of these descriptions is overdone; there is none of the usual straining after effect, and there is a modesty and simplicity in Mr. Lewis which is rare in animal biographers. One feels sure that everything he describes is genuine, though I should have doubted his account of a Dorset nightingale—the books say they are not found so far west—had I not many years ago heard one singing in the garden at Bingham's Melcombe. The end of the book is a great run right out of the hunting country and the Hill Fox escaping down the face of a cliff to the rocks below:

> It seemed impossible for him to keep his footing, but he went on scrambling and jumping down, pausing now and then to look for his next step, but never once glancing back towards Tom or the spectators above. All the time he used his brush in the most extraordinary manner as a sort of balancing pole, often holding it quite stiff and stuck out at an angle, and once or twice almost over his back.

One feels quite sure that Mr. Lewis has really seen a fox use his brush like this. Such certainties are rare in animal biographies.

DAVID GARNETT

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NATIONAL SOCIALISM

The German Universities and National Socialism. By E. Y. HARTSHORNE, JR. *George Allen and Unwin.* 6s.

Mr. Hartshorne, who is a Tutor in Sociology at Harvard, provides, in this book of less than 200 pages, an interesting and valuable study of the German Universities under the Nazi regime, based on original sources, combining personal impressions from a year spent in Germany with conclusions derived from the copious first-hand documentary and legislative material. Attention in this country has been concentrated on "the dismissals" from the University staffs, but, important as these are, they are only the consequences of a system and principles expressing the general Nazi philosophy and practice of government. They raise but they do not cover the more fundamental issues which underlie the Nazi theory and creed of life. What is a University? What are its place and functions, not merely as the apex of the educational system, but in the general life of a civilised community? What are the conditions essential for the performance of these functions?

The drastic reorganisation of the German Universities since 1933 gives the Nazi answer to these questions. Mr. Hartshorne rightly does not start with 1933. His first fifty pages are devoted to the historic background and the movement in thought, particularly since the war; and I could wish that this section had been doubled, enabling him to probe more deeply both into the period after 1918, and above all into the great epoch of evolution and struggle from 1815 to 1914, which made the Universities perhaps the greatest achievement of the German unification movement.

Two things happened in 1933 when the Nazi party was determined to make Germany a racial totalitarian State. Every institution had to be drastically "co-ordinated" and converted into an instrument of the totalitarian system: the fundamental principle was laid down that the individual belongs from birth to death and must be subordinated to the State which is not only an absolute value in itself but the synthesis of all values, material, moral and spiritual.

The first step was the racial and political purge of the staffs. Mr. Hartshorne examines the statistics at length. Exact accuracy is unattainable; nor does it matter, for whether the percentage works out at 14 or as high as 20, or the total of "dismissals" is taken to be something between 1,400 and 1,800, the important points are that it affected a very large number, and in that number a high percentage of the best brains working in the Universities and the Research Institutes, and that its justification was held to be racial and political, and not intellectual incompetence or failure in duty.

The "purge" was purely negative. It eliminated "racial and political poison" from the body academic; it did not secure that the Universities, so purged, would function as docile and efficient instruments of the totalitarian State. The old interpretation of the function and purpose of a University had to be eradicated, and the new totalitarian or Nazi interpretation imposed both on teachers and students, disobedience to which was a proof of "political unreliability," with the penalty of dismissal on that ground.

Previously to 1933, all Universities worth the name had certain vital principles in common—freedom of thought, freedom to express and discuss ideas, freedom to teach truth as the teacher held it, freedom to search for truth and proclaim it in teaching or writing when found: the selection of the staff free from all tests based on race, class, religion or political creeds, and based solely on the qualifications of the teacher for the duties assigned to him: security of tenure in the office held, with dismissal only on proved moral misconduct or neglect of duty: autonomy in the University to organise its curriculum, discipline and standards of work, without interference for political reasons: the admission of students solely on their intellectual qualifications to enter on the selected course of study.

The totalitarian regime, as Mr. Hartshorne's pages make abundantly clear, not only denies the validity of these fundamentals, but destroys them and puts in their place a system which is the negative of their truth and worth. The Universities have become, and are intended to be, educational barracks, closed to all but "Aryans," and in which "Aryan" students will be taught only by "Aryans"; autonomy is limited to a narrow sphere, the supreme authority being the Minister, whose code and decrees govern the curriculum and the discipline; and the prime function of the institution, as the apex of the educational system, is to complete the production, begun in the schools, of citizens in accordance with the creed of the Nazi totalitarian State. Truth is what the "State" (i.e., the Minister) decides is true: knowledge is what the "State" has decided you must know and believe: ignorance is what the "State" decides you must not know. "It is less important," said Minister Rust, "that a professor make discoveries than that he train his assistants and students in the proper view of the world" (i.e., the Nazi Weltanschaung).

We can picture for ourselves what this all means if we can imagine Lord Rutherford "dismissed" from the Cavendish Laboratory at Cambridge, and the directorship of that famous home of research controlled by an ex-elementary school teacher who had "taken to politics" and then become "Minister for Science, Education, and People's Culture" and governed it and the Universities by a governmental code and daily decrees from himself. For that is what has happened to the equally famous Kaiser Wilhelm Institute at Berlin and its chief, the great chemist, Haber, who incidentally, by his work on the fixation of nitrogen, saved Germany from starvation in the war.

Two things are clear. The new system reverses completely the system on which the German Universities from 1815 onwards established their supremacy in Europe. If we take at random a few illustrious names of the past—Humboldt, Savigny, Mommsen, Du Bois Reymond, Virchow, Ranke, Helmholtz, Dollinger, Treitschke—it is as certain as anything can be that not only they could not have done their work in a totalitarian University, but that they would not have been produced at all. And it is not surprising that men of such achievement as Einstein, Planck, Haber and many others are no longer on the staffs of the Universities to which they gave such distinction.

Some consequences are already apparent. Apart from the reduction in the number of German students, the number of foreign students has fallen, and the subscriptions to the learned or scientific journals have dropped, for the very good reason that many of the men under whom foreigners wished to study have been replaced by mediocrities, and the quality of the contributions, with the stifling of independent research, has been demonstrably impaired. They tell me, said Napoleon, that we have no

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There is a story behind these lines, from The Holiday Suggestions of the *New Statesman and Nation*. Many *N.S. & N.* readers already know part of the story—of a young Fleet Street couple who, during the Spanish revolution of October 1934, without any knowledge of hotel-keeping or of Spanish, decided to build a hotel in Spain, and of how Fleet Street conspired to put Tossa on the map.

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literature; I must speak to the Minister of the Interior about it. When the German Minister of Education has been "spoken to" and got produced a few more works such as Lenard's *Deutsche Physik*, which has stirred the derision of physicists all over the world, the triumph of the Nazi Aryan University will be complete—in Germany.

No one would deny that an omnipotent totalitarian State can convert its universities into obedient factories of any creed or system that it pleases. Nothing is easier, given the requisite force, than to destroy freedom of thought; but nothing is more difficult to re-create, once it has been destroyed. The tragic core of the German University problem to-day is not what has happened already, cruel as has been the fate of the "dismissed," but what its ultimate effect will be on the spiritual and intellectual life of the German people, who gave so much of imperishable value to European civilisation in the nineteenth century. The greatest service that British universities can render now and for the next twenty years is to maintain at all costs their own freedom; and by so doing in a happier future we can help to relight the lamps of free learning and free science in Germany.

CHARLES GRANT ROBERTSON

THE NOT SO GENTLE ESSAYIST

Small Talk. By HAROLD NICOLSON. *Constable.* 6*s.*

What has happened to our essayists? A few years ago there were scores of them, hardly a publisher's catalogue without its "new volume of essays" by A or B; some publishers had a school of essayists who at the call of Belles Lettres turned out all together in the Spring. "His admirers will not be disappointed" we used to read: where are those admirers now? "Whether Mr. Bootlace is writing about squids or Buddha, stamp-collecting or his first tricycle, whether he misses his train or catches it, no companion could be more indispensable/welcome/delicious/forthright, etc." How smooth the passage of those little volumes! The blurb had merely to quote what had been said of the author's last book; the reviewer echoed the blurb. No such unanimity existed in any other branch of reviewing, and if there were bad essayists one never heard of them.

But where are they to-day? Well, Max gave up writing long ago, Chesterton is dead, Belloc has gone back to history, Mr. Herbert is a politician, Mr. Priestley a best-seller. Y.Y. and Mr. E. V. Lucas are almost the only essayists who resist the times. The rank and file have disappeared. Their possible successors, giving way to their own charm, write newspaper articles or advertisements.

> There is magic in the green depths when the coot puts out its nose among the reeds, and the moorhen clucks industriously. The sun dapples the pool with gold, and the water, glistening on creamy limbs, is turned to rainbow.
>
> GREEN LINE FOR OPEN AIR.

You see? Cosier than Beverley—but then the smashing Eliot effect of the last line! It pays, and it saves one's respect, to advertise.

Mr. Nicolson, a very occasional essayist, belongs to the sweh, the Wilde-Beerbohm-Walkley tradition. Some aloofness has been sacrificed; most of the essays in *Small Talk* are reprinted from fashion magazines, as the titles, "Men's Clothes," "Our Youngers and Betters," "What Struck Me Most in America," show. And yet for the most part they are excellent, and the compromise—such as it is—is typical of Mr. Nicolson. For a swell he has two qualities strangely developed together: extreme irony and extreme amiability. How amiable and how ironic he can be one knows from the pages of *Some People*, a masterpiece of its sort; and to a lesser degree, as an essayist appearing in *The Graphic*, *Good Housekeeping*, *Nash's Magazine* and *Britannia and Eve*, he preserves the same duplicity. Do some of his revelations, about the Edwardian country house, celebrities, food, travel, Arthur Balfour's taste in fiction, and how to write books, represent a snob-value in journalism? No doubt they do; at the same time he writes admirably on all these subjects. Perhaps there is a more aggressive rosy affability in *Small Talk* than in *Some People*, but, allowing for the trivial and conventionally personal mood, it is extremely successful.

Reminiscence, the anecdote enshrining a character—that is the literary form of which Mr. Nicolson is a master. When he writes elegantly and with good sense about America, for example (quite a number of these essays are Anglo-American), one awaits the anecdote. It is sure to come, and sure to be good. I liked his description of the greedy millionaire, with a Dijon chef and a Swedish masseur, whose old age had concentrated on luncheon. At this meal—his only meal of the day—he gloatingly concocted a soup, mixing everything at table in a large silver tureen with a lamp underneath. While the guests watched silently, he dissected a lobster and dropped into the tureen with it truffles, cucumber, peppermint, olives, various spices and viands, ending with a bottle of Amontillado and of Veuve Cliquot poured in simultaneously.

> We were then given our soup. It was very hot indeed. It had a distinct taste of lobster mixed with cloves. It was like some very hot cough-mixture drunk with shrimp paste. But our host would lap and guzzle there, unconscious of the tentative and disappointed sips of those around him. After luncheon (he called it luncheon), he would go to his room and sleep. But his guests, who had had breakfast that morning but had not had the masseur, would walk, thoughtful and blear-eyed, along the herbaceous border.

He was, in fact, a bore on the monstrous scale. Mr. Nicolson's amiability has taken him a good deal of the way with some notable bores. The best thing in *Small Talk*, a story called "The Man Who Knew Everybody," describes the fascination of one of these monsters, whom one begins by admiring, whom one finds out and then studies as a curiosity. Julius Beningsen was an American, representing the Metropolitan Museum, in Teheran. He affected an accent which Americans took to be English; he was cultured, genteel, socially compelling; his teas with scones and little pots of Tiptree jams were the envy of the legation. And he knew everybody; casually, modestly in conversation his marvellous background would be revealed—telegrams from Mr. Morgan, a dedication in a book by André Gide, a memory of Oscar Wilde. He was impeccable in his way. Even when one had discovered that he was a fraud, it was still a pleasure to nudge the conversation so that he could achieve one of his tremendous asides and to watch its effect on strangers. The end of the story, unfortunately, like the reviewer of detective fiction, I must not disclose; but the book is worth buying for the enjoyment of these dozen pages alone. Mr. Nicolson plays with his mouse perfectly.

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In *The Tempest* Prospero tells his delicate Ariel how he had found him confined for a dozen years "into a cloven pine" by the damn'd witch Sycorax, so that his groans did make wolves howl, and penetrate the breasts of ever-angry bears; from which torment Prospero did by his art release him. It is a parable of Edward Thomas, once my dear and deeply admired friend. For Sycorax we may read poverty, neglect, and self-despair. The cloven pine (I am sorry to say) was journalism. And the deliverer (still more strangely) was the war.

The story of this life, with which I was from time to time intimately acquainted, is here told by Mr. Eckert with elaborate carefulness. One is overcome by the care bestowed upon the task. Out of a total of 328 pages the bibliography and index take up 183 pages, descriptions of each book and each edition being exactly given. The one thing I regret in the book is the omission of certain remarkable and characteristic passages that are found in the two little volumes, *As It Was* and *World without End*, published within the last ten years by "H.T.," which stands for Helen Thomas, his loving, patient, and ever-forgiving wife. It is strange that so little quotation is made from those two lovable books, for it was the first volume that drew Mr. Eckert's attention to Edward Thomas in the United States. He can hardly have wished to make his hero a knight above reproach, but perhaps the modesty of the Pilgrim Fathers, still lingering in isolated spots of the States, restrained him. Happily for us Helen Thomas, the daughter of Ashcroft Noble, whose high reputation as an essayist still dwelt in Fleet Street forty years ago, was less reticent.

Edward Thomas married while he was still a Scholar of Lincoln College, Oxford, and a year or two afterwards, when I had just returned from the Boer War, I met him for the first time. I was then editing the literary page of the old *Daily Chronicle*, which gave about three columns a day to reviews of the best books, and one evening a man strode into my office with a proud and melancholy shyness. He was tall, strongly built (he had rowed in the Lincoln College eight), but he seemed absurdly thin, and a face of refinement and high distinction was sicklied over with nervous melancholy and the obvious result of hunger. Almost too shy to speak, he sat down proudly and asked if I could give him any work. I inquired what sort of work he could do, and he answered, "None." I asked him on what subject he could do some reviewing, and he replied that he knew nothing of any subject and could not write. At once I recognised the true scholar's character, and he became one of my very best reviewers. He was one of the few whose work I could send up without reading or correcting. The others were Lionel Johnson, Bernard Shaw, William Archer, Arthur Waugh, Professor Haddon, and perhaps one other.

A little later I advised my friend John Fulleylove, the architectural artist, to ask Edward Thomas to write the text for his drawings in the book called *Oxford*, and between them they produced the best account of Oxford buildings and life that I know. I may be forgiven for dwelling on these services. Helen Thomas tells of them as saving the family from real poverty, and I mention them with the satisfaction of a Boy Scout when he recalls the day on which he performed, not "One Good Deed," but two.

As I at once perceived, Edward Thomas was a born essayist and a just and fastidious critic. His great admiration for Byron ("his poems, his personality, and his letters combined to make a figure that would be of enormous importance for another hundred years") may seem to some to contradict the word "fastidious," though I entirely agree with it. To Shelley and Wordsworth he was naturally devoted, but chiefly his knowledge and appreciation were given to the poets of earlier centuries. To them and to the relics of Welsh poetry, for he remained very much a Welshman at heart. Many of his essays written for me in the *Chronicle* and some of his "middles" for Massingham in the *Nation* were embodied in his admirable volumes, such as *Horae Solitariae*, *Light and Twilight*, and *Rest and Unrest*. For the most part they deal directly with criticism or with his careful observation of the country life in the southern England which he loved so well. But in one of his finest, *A Group of Statuary*, he turned to a common and lamentable scene of London life—the sight of the unemployed asleep all night upon open benches. When that appeared in the *Nation*, I wrote to him, "You beat us all."

But no reviewing, essays, or books written on commission can keep a man with a wife and three children alive. He worked hard when work came. He wrote some biggish books—the *Oxford* mentioned, *The Heart of England*, and the *Life of Jefferies* being among the best—but neither reviewing nor books of that quality are well paid. Worse even than haggard poverty was the appalling sense of unemployment and the knowledge that he was not doing the best work of which he was capable. He tried a novel, but for novels, except for one or two of the Russian, he had no feeling and took no delight. Want of his proper work, and the sense of loneliness and frustration kept him confined "into a cloven pine." Melancholy marked him for its own, and misery drove him at times to violent outbursts against his devoted wife, his children, and worse than all against himself. He even half-attempted suicide. As he said to his wife, "It's a kind of dreadful play-acting that comes over me." Most lonely writers can understand and sympathise, but to her it was no less dreadful.

Yet his kind of genius brought him many friends, and those of the best. He often attended the small gathering of poets and writers who met at the *Mont Blanc* in Gerrard Street. Edward Garnett, that discoverer and guide of genius, earnestly supported him. So did de la Mare, E. S. P. Haynes, Rupert Brooke, Gordon Bottomley, and the American poet Robert Frost, who perhaps simplified his manner and saved him from the infection of Pater and Sir Thomas Browne. That disease of precious and rather elaborate phrase was natural to him, though he rightly maintained that writing should be as sincere as the simplest things of nature. Inevitably poetic as he was, and poetic as were all his writings on country life, he was too shy to take poetry as his natural expression.

One day as I was walking down from his home at Steep above Petersfield, I asked him, "When are you going to publish your own poems?" "I have never written a line of verse in my life," he answered, and said no more. I thought he was concealing himself as he often did, but it was true, or very nearly true. But in the second year of the war he enlisted in the Artists' Regiment, and then obtained a Commission in the Garrison Artillery. He might have stayed at home, but anxiously went out with the guns. Helen Thomas's account of their Christmas together in 1916 is one of the most moving passages in literature. On the next

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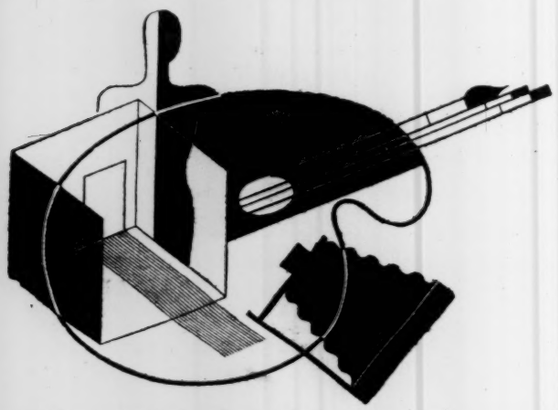

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Easter Monday he was killed near Arras by a direct hit from a shell while on an advance post.

The last time I saw him he was in officer's uniform, erect, alert, self-confident, free from melancholy. The Prospero of regular duties, sufficient pay for himself and family, and escape from all brooding and hesitation had released him from the cloven pine. The war, hateful as war necessarily is, had also given him the freedom to write down those poems by which he will be best remembered in our literature. As some further memorial a few of his friends have purchased a small wood on the top of a Hampshire down, where is to be set a simple stone bench inscribed with his name.

HENRY W. NEVINSON

DR. HORTON

Robert Forman Horton. By DR. ALBERT PEEL and SIR JOHN MARRIOTT. *Allen and Unwin.* 10s. 6d.

Dr. Horton, as the authors of this book remark, is the natural subject for either of two types of biography. We might have had the long, old-fashioned eulogy of the scholar and saint who ended a brilliant career at New College with an unexpected decision to become a congregational minister instead of going to the Bar or into politics or remaining a don or becoming an Anglican priest; we should see him, after making what was generally regarded as a remarkable sacrifice for principle, building up his small community in Hampstead into the remarkable religious centre where he laboured for fifty years, pouring out the most fervent evangelical oratory and collecting round him the famous, the rich and the cultured without ever forgetting that he was primarily a salvationist whose duty it was to minister to the needy and the simple. We should be told that he yet managed in the course of a busy pastorate to set doubts at rest by his proof that evolution was compatible with religion and that the higher criticism of the Bible could not destroy the foundations of Christian faith. By his books on inspiration, Dr. Horton did for British Nonconformity what Dr. Gore did for Anglicanism in *Lux Mundi*. In the course of this record of successful activity we should find that Dr. Horton was that surprising and unusual type of preacher who combines with real scholarship as direct an emotional appeal as John Wesley's. He regarded himself as a prophet who must deliver in the pulpit the message from Heaven given him that very day. Plenty of quotations could be found to show the success of this evangelical appeal. In the early days of his career at Hampstead, at any rate, Dr. Horton was regarded by many members of his congregation with feelings not far short of idolatry.

Such a formal and solid record of Dr. Horton's external achievements would be impressive enough. But it would only make way for the different type of biographer, a younger and perhaps malicious disciple of Lytton Strachey who had seen in Dr. Horton's autobiography and diary the perfect material for a disrespectful analysis. Aware of this, his biographers tell the story of external success without undue or excessive eulogy, and although fervent admirers and intimate friends of Dr. Horton, they guard against ridicule by themselves pointing out from time to time the inconsistencies of Dr. Horton's character. For he was indeed a surprising mixture. There was the pleasantly ironical don who could say when he was shown to have made a mistake: "I have always looked upon natural science as an impertinence and an intrusion into the freedom of the mind." And there was the other quite unironic Dr. Horton whose salvationist appeals sometimes dropped into sheer incoherence, who was capable, for instance, of talking the most astonishing nonsense about God's punishment for Sunday gardening when people worked on their allotments instead of going to church during the war. It was this naive and credulous preacher who thought G. B. S. "the most dangerous anti-Christ of our time," and who, after reading *Androcles and the Lion*, wrote in his diary: "Day darkened by that critical loveless spirit of denial." His biographers rightly remark that in these references to Mr. Shaw, the "limitations of Horton's outlook are perhaps sufficiently indicated." In the same way his biographers have the sense to see that he was in his personal relations sometimes a very simple and even an unwise leader; and although they do not attempt any subtle analysis of that remarkable friendship which he revealed to the world in his Autobiography, they note that he was singularly childish in such matters. They do not disguise either that Dr. Horton's diary gives evidence of the most extreme fits of depression just at those times when less privileged friends were envying his mystic experiences with a living and personal Christ. That perhaps is the most remarkable feature of the life of a very curious man—that while his friends believed him to be walking the streets of Paradise he was in fact spending much of his time in purgatory. Yes, certainly the modern biographer, equipped with the jargon if not with the technique of psycho-analysis, would find Dr. Horton an attractive subject for dissection. His present biographers are content to avoid the pitfall of the formal eulogy and the full-length quotation of documents which invite mockery. They tell the story in a straightforward, somewhat prosaic way, admiring but noting that not everything was well beneath the surface, that there was here something to smile at or regret as well as much to commend.

THE MEANING OF HISTORY

Civitas Dei, Vol. II. By LIONEL CURTIS. *Macmillan.* 12s. 6d.

Mr. Curtis takes the world in his stride from China to Peru, and from the Middle Ages to the day before yesterday. In seventy-four chapters he examines the whole history of civilisation, stopping sometimes to make a judgment, at other moments content briefly to sketch the contours of an event. The account, if I understand Mr. Curtis's treatment aright, is intended to show that "the end and object of human society is to increase in men their sense of duty, one to another, and not, as a British statesman has told us, to raise the standard of living." The meaning of history, he thinks, is its proof that the essential Christian revelation is true. "Men can grow to perfection, but only in so far as they mould their relations one to another on the principle that each man owes an infinite duty to God and therefore to all his fellows."

No one can read these pages without the sense that Mr. Curtis has felt deeply the sweep and majesty of his theme. One who lacks his own inner vision must confess to a sense of bewilderment at his interpretation. There is little scientific treatment of the relation between means and ends. Marxism will not do. Fascism is rejected. Mr. Curtis warns us against seeing in the sovereign state "the last word in human development." He emphasises with passion the ugly brutality of war. He adjures us not to be overcome by fear, not "to betray the succours which reason offers." If we only realise that Christ's scheme of human relations

What do Catholics really think?

As the *New Statesman* has pointed out, there are many English Catholics "whose outlook is very rarely represented in the ordinary Catholic press." We feel that *New Statesman* readers will be interested to know what really is the Catholic outlook on the many problems of the day. Do you know, for instance, what the attitude of the Vatican is to Franco? To the French Popular Front? What Catholics really think about Chesterton? About M. Blum? About—the *New Statesman*?

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can be made incarnate in human society, we can attain the perfection implicit in human nature since it learned to distinguish between good and evil.

Of the intense conviction which lies behind Mr. Curtis's pages no one can doubt. But it is difficult to see that he has given us any clue to his faith. Force is ruled out. The materialist interpretation is rejected as inadequate. The one thing that does not emerge is how the sense of an infinite duty is learned by men from the operations in which they are involved. Certainly his historical narrative does not explain it, unless it is intended to demonstrate how brief and fragile is any dominion not ultimately based on the Christian principle. Are we to infer that men, at the end, come to see this by trial and error, and that, in the long run, they are led by reason to this perception? Or is Mr. Curtis giving us a new Providential theory of history the key to which lies in some mystic insight not vouchsafed to those not of his faith? The record he unfolds is one, for him, of unceasing failure to attain his truths. From that failure he seems to emerge with the sense that, given the courage to learn from experience, all may yet be well. But why there should be the belief that we so learn, not least in the world of grim contemporary phenomena, Mr. Curtis does not tell us. His pages have confidence and urgency. But they are the incantation of a mystic rather than the analysis of a scientist. Everything he recounts goes to show the corruption of power built upon force, the failure which ultimately attends that corruption. But I can find nothing in his pages to suggest that, out of these failures, men turn in unceasing numbers to the "sense of an infinite duty to God." If Mr. Curtis has discovered ground for such a view, he does not reveal it here.

"It is time to turn," Mr. Curtis writes, "and to face the inexorable question, what are the influences which really change the minds of masses of men?" In nearly four hundred more pages I cannot really see that he ever returns to that "inexorable question." We are led through the French Revolution, the Act of Union, Napoleon, over the widest ranges of nineteenth century and of contemporary history, to be told, at the end, that we shall perish unless we learn a sense of duty to our fellows. I think Mr. Curtis is right. But I suspect that when he agreed with the "British statesman" that "raising the standard of living" is not a fundamental object of society, he put on one side the key to the "inexorable question" he sought to answer. Perhaps, however, his third volume will supply a response so far concealed from readers of the second.

H. J. LASKI

NAPOLEON'S LAST YEARS

St. Helena By OCTAVE AUBRY. *Gollancz.* 18*s.*

M. Aubry's *St. Helena* lay on my bookshelf for several weeks before I could bring myself to pick it up. After two years spent investigating, for theatrical purposes, all the available literature dealing with Napoleon's last years on that island, I shied at re-immersing myself in a story that had become too familiar to be anything but tiresome and repetitive. I was mistaken. Let me say quickly that I found M. Aubry's *St. Helena* so absorbing that I forgot ever having read a line on the subject before. It is not only a finely written and deeply conscientious portrayal of the final episode of Napoleon's life and his long and last battle with the English (and incidentally with himself), but it is also a remarkably fair exposition of both the French and English points of view at St. Helena. In one volume it condenses every detail of value from all the English records and from the innumerable memoirs that were penned by the Emperor's entourage at the time, weighing and sifting the evidence and finally reconstructing the whole side-splitting and poignant drama in so homogeneous and skilful a manner that one is held engrossed to the last ghastly chapters. At times the grotesque absurdities of the life and the quarrels at Longwood and the sometimes infantile and ridiculous sides of Napoleon's character are so frankly exposed that one stops and asks oneself if it is really a Frenchman who has dared write thus of the great national Hero. For indeed in all but the first and penultimate chapters one is treated to scene after scene of purest comedy. For instance: Lowe has found incriminating letters written by Las Cases, who is now under arrest. The situation is serious for the French. Napoleon questions St. Denis, who is aware of the contents of the letters.

"How does it treat Admiral Cockburn?"

"So-so, sire" (with a gesture that meant neither well nor badly).

"Does it say that I called him a shark?"

"Yes, Sire. But it also says your Majesty is aware of his honesty and cannot refuse him your esteem."

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"And Sir George Bingham?"
"It speaks very well of him, as also of Colonel Wilks."
"Does it mention Admiral Malcolm?"
"Yes, sire, it treats him extremely well."
"It says nothing of the Governor?" (Lowe)
Aly could not keep from smiling.
"It says a great deal about him, sire."
"Does it repeat what I said: 'He is a low creature,' and that his face is the meanest I have ever seen?"
"Yes, sire," said Aly, but he added that the language was often more moderate.
"Does it say that I called him 'a Sicilian bum-bailiff'?"
"Yes, sire."
"Well, he is!"

In fact there are times when the comedy borders on farce, with Napoleon as the chief comedian; but on reading the French original I found this to be due to the translation of the dialogue which, admirable as it is otherwise, is here often too literal and occasionally makes nonsense of quite rational remarks.

Mr. Aubry's portrait of Hudson Lowe is no less fair (and no less ridiculous) than that of Napoleon. Here again he gives a completely unbiased exposition of the flaming hatred and the constant warfare that raged between the two men. In many instances he finds that the scales balance in Lowe's favour.

As the book carries one through to the last year, Comedy gives place to Tragedy and the portrayal of the final weeks is overwhelming and terrible. No sooner, however, have they closed the Emperor's eyes, no sooner have the sobbing followers filed out of the death chamber than we are plunged once more from the sublime to the ridiculous as the gruesome comedy of the autopsy begins. Angry voices are raised over the dead man's body. The French declare the liver to be enlarged, the English insist that it is normal. Even at the funeral there are high words over questions of precedence.

To anyone unfamiliar with the mass of evidence it might appear that Mr. Aubry had over-emphasised his comedy. Somehow I doubt whether he even looked for it. He has merely been scrupulously truthful, and in so being he has shown the last phase at St. Helena to be what it was in fact, History's supreme Farcical Tragedy.

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NEW NOVELS

At Last the Island. By MARGARET LANE. *Heinemann.* 7s. 6d.
Mr. and Mrs. North. By RICHARD LOCKRIDGE. *Michael Joseph.* 7s. 6d.
A House for Joanna. By JOHN HEYGATE. *Cape.* 7s. 6d.
Personal Combat. By ELLIOTT ARNOLD. *Constable.* 7s. 6d.

For the exacting, I suppose that with the exception of Miss Lane's novel this is rather a quiet week. Mr. Lockridge's *New Yorker* short stories about mild marital misunderstandings are excellent of their kind, but slightly lack salt; Mr. Heygate's book, which is entirely about doing up a farm, keeps to the point somehow too happily, and Mr. Arnold's grafting policeman becomes, in the end, rather too much of a great cursing bogy-man.

At Last the Island is, roughly, a novel about two London intellectuals, their marriages and children, plus one young American woman artist. In some curious way, it is the first English novel I have read for years in which the characters' ordinary minor reactions and idiom seem *exactly* true to contemporary life. This results in a particular kind of authenticity which makes the book as fascinating to read as the letters of some amusing, intelligent friend. As the conversation of nearly all English, in contradistinction to American, novels is now written in no known tongue, I advise any foreigner who may wish to know how English words—not smarty words, or slang—are actually used nowadays, to buy this book.

Russell Murray, a good, non-moneymaking author, marries Maisie, his housekeeper, in pursuit of food and no fuss. She turns to spiritualism, and her interview with the young painter Cornelia, Miss Lane's heroine, is charming. Maisie is packing the household for their permanent move to the *Iles d'Hyères*,

> Cornelia came into the kitchen and looked at the box, packed tight as a honeycomb with straw and paper.
> "What is it, china?"
> "Oh no, dear, just my personal things. My trumpets and. . . ."
> "Your *what*?"
> Maisie blushed slightly.
> "My trumpets," she said firmly, meeting Cornelia's startled glance with a look that was both defiant and conciliating, "and I've got some new things, too, from Mr. Baker, the famous medium. The only thing that worries me is that they seem so dreadfully fragile."
> "But, Maisie . . ." Cornelia sank down on a kitchen chair and regarded the older woman with amazement. . . . The girl's face, surprised yet friendly, seemed to reassure her, for she bent down and tenderly unwrapped one of the objects in the packing case. This, a small red celluloid trumpet, she put into Cornelia's hand.
> "Look," she said gently, but with pride, "real psychaloid. The kind we use at the direct-voice circle. Mr. Baker recommends them."

The voyage is temporarily wrecked by Murray's hopelessness about bills, and the bailiffs, and Cornelia falls in love with Tom Willett, a feature editor on a daily paper. The moments in his office, and the dinner party in which his young German wife, a magnificently observed character, notices Cornelia's growing feeling for her husband, are astonishing in their grasp and accuracy. Eventually, nearly everyone gets to the island, where their emotional problems all become catastrophically solved, and with somewhat too much of a bang. The story, as I have hinted, is the only really weak point. Miss Lane's characterisation is exquisite, but her action becomes haphazard, and at the finish one has the sensation of a set of beautifully conceived personalities all left a little in the lurch. Had this not been so, she would have produced something very considerable indeed; in the future she almost certainly will, and, as it is, only just misses doing so. There is not one comparatively new novelist in England who should be watched with more care and expectation.

Mr. and Mrs. North are easily remembered by readers of the *New Yorker*. Unintended to deal with life's more annoying bumps, these stories could still be a little less cushioned: Mr. Lockridge's couple live in a very much safer world than is really credible, or even quite agreeable. His technical virtuosity, however, perfectly projects his understanding of one sort of happily married conversation, which is simultaneously frustrated and content, half-articulate and absurdly clear, unnecessary and yet ceaseless. With subjects so slight that they could be better called pretexts, Mr. Lockridge can be unusually entertaining. There is a story called *The Elephant Comes In* about Mr. North alone: he is bored with party conversation, which concerns shooting birds.

> People ought to shoot larger things, he thought. Like elephants. Mr. North had been reading about an elephant. He thought it would be fun to bring the elephant into the conversation, suddenly.

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. . . Everybody waited.

"Well," said Mr. North "Well. . . ." Everybody kept on looking at him.

"It's just something I read," Mr. North said. "Nothing, really. It's about why nobody ever sees a dead elephant." Everybody looked interested.

"Well," said Mr. North, "when they don't feel well—elephants—they just sort of lag behind and then go off and die. Then they get covered with things. That's why nobody ever sees them."

It didn't sound so well, even to Mr. North. "You know all these stories about elephants living to be two or three hundred years old?" he said, quickly. "Well, there's nothing to it. Ninety-five is old for an elephant." The rest looked expectant. "*Mighty* old," said Mr. North. "And do you know how you tell when an elephant is dying?" Everybody shook his head. "They fall down," said Mr. North. "Just sort of fall down."

Everybody waited for him to go on.

"That's about all I know, really," said Mr. North. "I just happened to be reading about elephants somewhere."

"It was very interesting," said Mr. North's host. Everybody nodded.

"Well," said Bill, "how about a little bridge?"

It will be seen that Mr. North is not for those who want to be amused and made to think at the same time. But for everyone else he will do very well.

Mr. Heygate's book, which has no discernible plot, is oddly difficult to deal with. Here, in voluminous detail, is a document about how to transform an old, wrecked South of England farm into a warm, hospitable and not unimpressive house. The author's thoroughness may be gauged from the fact that he dispatched, among others, the following radio-telegram from somewhere near the Azores. "Install running water basin north-west corner of north-west dressing room." Crammed with invaluable suggestions about servants, water supply, cooking, everything, this book can certainly be recommended as a guide to those with the money and the wish to emulate Mr. Heygate, but hardly as a novel, to anyone. Joanna, who seems awfully cross and offhand ("P.S.—I'd like to marry you"), has a baby, and the author describes the incident touchingly and sensitively. He writes ably, with a quiet, engaging simplicity of his own. But at that point in the book where the house temporarily depresses him, and he suddenly explodes, "For what? All this for what? . . ." one is inclined to answer, "I'm sorry, but I really don't know."

> And we had created all this by ourselves or by our orders. We had turned the shell of a house into a living home. We had given it a boiler for a heart and maintained its blood heat through pipes and radiators. Nerves of wire ran down the walls and under floors to an indicator in the kitchen.

Well, the thing is that they didn't. They ran to an indicator in the bank. The truth of the matter would seem to be that it is already impossible to accept books of this kind unless their authors will consent to face up to a wider version of contemporary realities. By this, I do not mean that it has become impossible for persons inhabiting the *rentier* world to write good books, but it has most certainly become impossible for such writers to assume, or imply, that this is the only world which exists, for them and for you. It results in their writing the one fairy story which nobody believes any more, and having a baby doesn't make it any better.

> Of course! That was what they had been waiting for, the brick walls and the oak rafters, for the sound of children's voices. With Tom's cry the house awoke. I smiled and went upstairs to bed.

Those are the author's closing lines. I suggest, just for a change, that he should frown, come downstairs, let the house go hang, and watch out for conscription.

Personal Combat is genuine imported tough stuff, not quite up to top level, but quite reliable. Terry, a not very bright Irish boy, abandons church-ridden parents for other, less bright boys, soda jerking, and eventually, burglary, beguiled by two amiable monsters called Abe and Red. A political boss, noticing his talents, gets him a job as a cop, whereupon he makes so much money shouting at rich, guilty Chinamen, etc., that Abe and Red find themselves framed and shot for what they might remember. From then on, he becomes increasingly successful, and tipsy; he beats up strike pickets, and grills butcher boys until they go mad. "Listen doc. He's faking, I tell you. He's no more nuts than I am. The bastard is trying to get out of frying for killing the old man, I tell you." It is easy to make *Personal Combat* sound funny, but less easy to make it sound as readable as it is: the treatment of Terry doesn't get seriously out of hand until the end. Mr. Arnold's setting, which is the American alliance between criminals and police, is not yet hackneyed, and he has managed it with imagination and detailed understanding.

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SHORTER NOTICES

Industrial Reconstruction and the Control of Competition. By A. F. LUCAS. *Longmans.* 15s.

Professor Lucas preserves, in his study of combines, associations and Government control schemes, a nice balance between description, historical explanation and critique. With less of the theoretical sweep and profundity, with a more manageable bulk of facts and figures, he has provided an approximate English counterpart to his compatriot Dr. A. R. Burns' monumental *Decline of Competition*—no mean feat. For him, Great Britain provides the most interesting laboratory in which to study the decline of *laisser faire* under its own internal stresses and the rise of the as yet unformulated alternative. Control there must be; control there is; but is it the right kind, and can it endure in its present form or forms? A study of integration and control in the major British industries, in raw materials and in agriculture yields no certain answer and no uniform theoretical pattern; but, apart from the useful factual and statistical information provided, *Industrial Reconstruction and the Control of Competition* contains plenty of shrewd comment and wise generalisation. Notably we are warned that we have not by any means seen the worst of our Government-fostered monopolies. When industry is working below capacity anyway their squeezing powers are limited by the rise in unit costs which follows curtailment of output; and in previous booms there has been foreign competition, unchecked by tariffs, to curb monopoly power. The Free Trade safeguard has gone; surplus capacity will go in time (and a good thing, too), the Common Law provides no remedy for the aggrieved, Whitehall is even reputed to lend a favourable ear to suggestions that no newcomers should be allowed in certain of the controlled industries. The prospect is not cheerful. The only bright side of the picture is that the Socialist economy of the future may be able to learn from the present and impending muddle at least some of the mistakes to be avoided.

Adonais. By DOROTHY HEWLETT. *Hurst and Blackett.* 15s.

This lengthy biography of Keats—440 pages—appears to have made use of all the evidence relevant to a description of his life. It is a pity that it should have been written as the "first popular and human book on Keats the man as distinct from Keats the poet," for this has spoilt its chance of being a standard work. Unpopular and inhuman biographies have the merit of assuming the greatness of their subject

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All at 2.30 p.m. unless otherwise stated.

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GARRICK. **Sarah Simple.** Mon., Thurs.

GLOBE. **They Came By Night.** Wed., Thur.

HIS MAJESTY'S. **Balalaika.** Wed. & Sat.

LYRIC. **Victoria Regina.** Wed. & Thurs.

PHOENIX. **Judgment Day.** Thurs., Sat.

PLAYHOUSE. **Whiteoaks.** Wed., Thurs., Sat.

QUEEN'S. **Women of Property.** Wed., Sat.

ST. MARTIN'S. **The King's Pirate.** Tu., Fri.

STRAND. **A Spot of Bother.** Thurs. next.

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INDEX

An Index to Volume XIII is in the course of preparation and will be ready shortly. It will be sent to postal subscribers, free of charge, on application; and for one shilling, post free, to other readers.

The Publisher,
THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION,
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and do not delay the narrative with unceasing reminders that they are telling us about a spiritual emanation, a star, a planet, with a high destiny, etc., etc. How many readers are likely to buy the book asking, "Who is this man Keats?" Besides, we feel ourselves cheated of our little personal pleasures when our most romantic and banal comments are, as it were, continually being taken out of our mouths. So reverent is the authoress to her hero that she omits the letters written during his last illness to spare us the pain of knowing how violently he expressed his jealousy of Fanny Brawne. However, the immense amount of information, letters in their life-context, Charles Brown's diary of the walking tour, excerpts from contemporary reviews, remarks of Keats' friends and so on, make the book interesting and with judicious skipping of comments even readable.

Love, Marriage and Divorce. By MACPHERSON LAWRIE. *Methuen.* 5s.

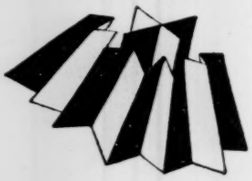
A year or so ago there was published a striking and extraordinarily sane popular medical book, *Nature Hits Back*, bringing into practical relation with everyday life those findings of modern psychology and modern physiology which can stand exposure to the open air of this world. Dr. Macpherson Lawrie, the author of that book, has just written another, in which he discusses the problems of love and marriage, critically, frankly, and, what is less common, constructively. Dr. Lawrie writes well and simply; he has no literary affectations and avoids technical jargon. In fact, he writes as a wise and experienced physician might talk to an intelligent patient. Conventionalists and revolutionists in sociology may each be advised to read this book; they will both find much that will entertainingly give them plenty to think about. In his epilogue, the author locates the origin of the book in his "supreme and living faith in the future radiance of youth"; and he adds that "the needless *Frustration of Possibilities* appears to him the most bitter and intolerable tragedy existent on earth."

GRAMOPHONE NOTES

THERE is enough fine music in the July lists to keep a man happy for months. In a naughty and depressing world the activities of Clerkenwell Road provide an oasis of beauty—that is if you can pay the rather stiff prices. Record lending libraries are obviously a difficult proposition (there is at least one in London, the Recorded Music Library, 38a, George Street, W.1), and the companies are slow to adopt the suggestion made years ago by Compton Mackenzie, that records, like books, should be substantially reduced in price two or three years after issue. Their attitude is not unreasonable, because the public refuses to believe that cheap records can be really good. Decca, who published two delicious Mozart concertos by Kathleen Long and the Boyd Neel Orchestra at seven and sixpence each complete work, believe that if they had doubled their prices they would also have doubled their sales; and have since then largely abandoned their excellent series of half-crown classics in favour of five shilling discs.

This month I begin with chamber music instead of orchestral because the outstanding record, taking into account music, performance and recording, is that of Casals and Horszowski in Beethoven's *'Cello Sonata, Op. 102, No. 1* (H.M.V. 4 sides). This is a very fine and little known work on the threshold of Beethoven's last period, never recorded before. One is tempted to add that it need never be recorded again, so masterly is the interpretation of Casals, who is not merely the greatest 'cellist in the world, but among the two or three greatest performers in any field of music. Not only string players, but singers and conductors, could learn from these records more about the art of phrasing than most teachers could impart in a year. Mark especially the bigness and long-sightedness of his interpretation, and his fusing (*not* alternation) of those qualities which for convenience we call masculine and feminine: strength with subtlety, vigour with tenderness. The pianist is fully worthy of this collaboration. A more familiar masterpiece of late Beethoven is the last *Piano Sonata, Op. 111*, played by Kempff on Decca (6 sides). Now that the Schnabel records are no longer available, the only other version of this Sonata is the Columbia set by Petri. Both are so finely played and recorded that I can only advise intending purchasers to try each out. My own feeling is that Petri makes a more imposing thing of the rhetoric of the first movement, but does not see so far as Kempff into the mystical and compassionate depths of the great *Adagio*. It is a long way back to Beethoven's *Op. 18, No. 5*, of which I had no space last month to mention the Lener Quartet's recording (Col. 6 sides), the best of this not especially notable work. There are two interesting single piano discs: a brilliant performance of the fourth Chopin *Scherzo* by Horowitz (H.M.V.), and Busoni's *Indianisches Tagebuch* by Petri (Col.): a noteworthy issue this, since scarcely any of Busoni's original music is yet recorded. The third of these four sketches, a sort of negro spiritual, is attractive, and I wish I could feel the whole thing to be more impressive than I did, but it is comforting to find that even Professor Dent has nothing to say about this work in his life of Busoni. I hope some of the great things are to follow: the *Piano Concerto* and the *Sonatinas*, for example. A warm-blooded and agreeable novelty is Turina's *Oracion del Torero*, originally written for lutes but well played on a single Columbia by the Gordon String Quartet. To return to the classics: Milstein does on five sides (Col.) the same Bach *Partita for unaccompanied violin* which Busch recorded on six sides and Menuhin on eight; not cuts, but no repeats and brisker tempi, account for the difference. Milstein is brilliant and fluent, but the better is the enemy of the good, and Menuhin's impeccable style tells, especially in the great Chaconne. G. D. Cunningham has made a very fine record indeed of the *Fantasia in F minor* (*K.* 608) which in the last year of his life Mozart wrote for a "mechanical organ in a clock." Incredible that music of such splendour, formal complexity, and (in the middle section) melting pathos should proceed from such a commission. The reproduction of the Kingsway Hall organ is superb (Col. 2 sides).

Boyd Neel's Orchestra provides a most interesting first recording of Sibelius' *Rakastava Suite, Op. 14* for strings and timpani (Decca 4 sides). The ease and maturity of this music puzzled me greatly until I learned that the low opus number is deceptive and the music dates from 1913. This seems to me, after a few hearings, a really valuable addition to the Sibelius repertoire. *Rakastava* means "the lover"; and, though the passion lies far beneath the surface, the writing is of a tenderness and transparency not often matched in Sibelius. A word of admiration to Boyd Neel for his remarkable grasp of widely differing musical styles. His *Introduction and Allegro for Strings* showed also a deep understanding of this major work of Elgar, and I am reminded of these records by the issue this month of the same work played by Boult and the B.B.C. Orchestra (H.M.V. 3 sides, with *Sospiri, Op. 70*). This is likely to remain the standard recording for some time owing to the added depth of B.B.C. strings and H.M.V. recording; but it must be remembered that the Boult set is over twice as expensive as the Neel. An excellent first recording by Boult (H.M.V. 3 sides, with the *Eugen Onegin Polonaise*) brings us Berlioz's early *Francs Juges* Overture, an



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CORNWALL. On glorious west coast, between St. Ives and Land's End. Several comfortable furnished cottages right on the cliffs to let for any period, holidays or residence. Grand spot, sandy bathing coves, delightful moorland country. Book now for July, September and later. No August vacancies. Terms and photos, MRS. SEVIER, The Bungalow, Pendeen.

HOLIDAYS in DEVON on the Children's Farm. Children met in London and conveyed by car both ways. MRS. VOLKMER, B.A., Romansleigh, Devon.

ROSS-ON-WYE. Quiet, lovely surroundings, bracing sunny situation. Excellent cuisine, diets a speciality. Separate tables, Vi-spring mattresses. Central for all parts Wye Valley. MISS MATTHEWS, Galen Lodge.

SALTDEAN, Brighton. GLENDOWER first-class guest house. Tel.: Rottingdean 9552.

NEW FOREST. Comfortable, small Guest House in beautiful surroundings. Open country, moors, forest. Pleasant gardens, hard tennis court. Riding and swimming available. Vegetarians welcomed. Guest House, Godshill, Fordingbridge, Hants.

WOOD END Private Hotel and Country Club, Wishing Tree Rd., St. Leonards-on-Sea. 8 acres attractive gardens; tennis, billiards, 10 minutes by bus to sea. Home comforts, from 2½ *gns.* weekly.

CHELTENHAM SPA, in the heart of the incomparable Cotswolds and centre for tours to the Wye and Severn Valleys, Shakespeareland, etc. Endless entertainment. Sport for all. Illustrated Cheltenham and Cotswold Guide free from Dept. 16, Town Hall, Cheltenham.

ASHDOWN FOREST, TYES, Nutley, Sussex. Country House in 6 acres; 600 ft. up, lovely views; modern comforts; attractive meals and service you will appreciate. From 3 *gns.* weekly. Nutley 85.

LYNDALE SCHOOL Summer Holiday Centre for Boys and Girls, open July 25th to Sept. 5th. 67 Eton Avenue, N.W.3. PRI 6466.

HOLIDAY SUGGESTIONS—continued

CORNWALL (near Looe), DOWNDERRY. THE WIDE SEA GUEST HOUSE. Enlarged, with sun verandah. Modern comforts. Charming garden leading to beach. H. & C. throughout. Golf, tennis. Illustrated brochure from Proprietress, MISS W. M. ELIOTT. Tel.: Downderry 48.

THE OLD MILL RESTAURANT
West Harnham, SALISBURY.
Large Countrified bedrooms with good attendance.
Candle-lit 13th Century Refectory for meals.
River bathing. Riding.
Delightful Trips. Excellent Food.
Terms from 3½ *gns.* per week.

DEVON (North), Cherryford, Parracombe. Restful surroundings. Nr. sea, golf, Exmoor. Mod. convens.

GEORGIAN Farmhouse (George II's shooting box), 13 miles Eastbourne. Home produce. Electric light; 2 bathrooms. Riding, Tennis. 3½ *gns.* BATTEN Cralle Place, Horam, Sussex.

HUNTLY, BISHOPSTEIGNTON, S. Devon. A friendly hotel with a lovely garden. Tennis, golf, riding. H. and c. in bedrooms. Near Dartmoor. Sea bathing at Teignmouth. From 3 *gns.*

HAPPY HOLIDAYS. Grange Guest House, Banwell, Som. Mendips; 5 miles from Weston-super-Mare.

WEST OF IRELAND. Strand Hotel, Dugort, Achill Isle. Beautifully situated on finest bathing strand in Ireland. Magnificent scenery. Excellent cuisine. Hot and cold water. Terms moderate. Under new management. TOM SHERIDAN, Proprietor.

THE Left Holiday Rest Camp. Near Hamble river. Particulars, PYLANDS, Bursledon, Southampton.

ASHDOWN FOREST. Beautiful home for guests, standing in 7 acres. Restful. Electric light, h. and c. running water, garage, tennis, riding. The Clock House, Nutley, Sussex. 'Phone: Nutley 96.

LOVELY DORSET. XIVth Century House, charming garden, bath, electric light. Ideal centre walking, motoring, appealing greatly to Artists and Literary folk. THE PITCH MARKET, Cerne Abbas. Telephone: 64.

SUSSEX AND SURREY, centre of best scenery in both. Friendly atmosphere, home-grown produce, food reform diet. Timberscombe Guest House, Fernhurst, Sussex (near Haslemere). 'Phone: Fernhurst 6.

LAKELAND. Delightful 18th cent. house, between Buttermere and Vale of Lorton; 9*s.* daily. NELSON, Low House, Crummockwater, Cockermouth.

PAYING GUESTS welcomed. Superior Country House near Brighton. Garage, tennis, riding, walks, etc. Excellent food and cooking; modern conveniences. From 2½ *gns.* inclusive. "ARDEN GRANGE," Albourne, Sussex. Tel.: Hurstpierpoint 185.

WEST HIGHLANDS. A small, quiet and comfortable hotel, beautifully situated on Loch Linnhe. MISS M. VELLACOTT, Onich Hotel, Onich, Fort William, Inverness-shire.

CORNWALL, Penzance. Comfortable guest house. Close sea, country, from 2 *gns.* Reduction long visits. "Westbourne," Alexandra Road.

DARTMOUTH, Devon, Warfleet Creek Hotel. Up to date. Near sea. Real French Cooking. Moderate terms. French management. Tel.: 144.

CORNWALL. Comfortable modern guest house in unspoiled Cornish village. By sea and river. Excellent cuisine. Golf, fishing, boating. Telephone 48. MISS GARLAND, "Wellside," Polruan-by-Fowey.

JOLLY House Party near Angmering, Sussex. Tennis, riding, boating, bridge, etc. 2 or 3 vacancies, August. Write Box 40, c/o COWIES, 17 Gresham St., E.C.2.

FISHING, tennis, riding available; near sea, golf. Guests, gentleman's home, h. & c. bedrooms. 4 *gns.* week. ALDRIDGE, Mount Falcon, Ballina, Mayo.

WEST SUSSEX. Comfortable rooms, country village, 5 min. S. Downs. Perfect walks. Good food. Books, loggia, wireless. £2 each wkly. No extras. Box 864, N.S. & N., 10 Gt. Turnstile, London, W.C.1.

PERRANPORTH, Cornwall. To let, modern Bungalow, furnished. Two bedrooms, 2 sitting, bath, lav., separate; h. & c. water all rooms. Sea and Coombe views. 35*s.* weekly; garage. Apply SULLY, Sullys Hotel, Perranporth.

DEVON Farm. Jolly party, Aug. 1st to 14th. Riding, Bathing. 79 Finsbury Pk. Rd. Canonbury 1348.

IN a quiet place within a few minutes of Sea and Downs. H. and C. and gas fires in bedrooms, best English cooking, delightful garden, very comfortable. SUNSHINE HOUSE, Seaford, Sussex. 'Phone 533.

HASTINGS. THE TOWERS. Old Italian House with every modern comfort; unique position, 5 mins. sea. Shady gardens. Garage. Write for brochure or 'phone 1786.

PARK House, Black Notley, Braintree, Essex. 16th Century Guest House. Quiet, informal. 5*s.* per day.

CARAVAN, immed. let 30*s.* p.w. £3 p.m. Well-equipped artistic, quiet, acc. 3. chem. lav., nr. Dorking. MISS ALLEN, 109 Abbey Rd. Mans., N.W.8. MAI. 1742.

HOLIDAY SUGGESTIONS—continued

BY SPECIAL AEROPLANE
to PARIS and the INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION
July 17th–August 7th.
3 Days, incl. cost £8 18*s.* 6*d.*
Also by train: 4 days, £5 10*s.* 6*d.*

SWITZERLAND ROUND TOURS
Escorted exclusive parties leaving London July 31st, August 14th. 15 days: 16 Guineas.

Details of above and Norwegian Tours from S. L. A., Ltd. (SEA-LAND-AIR TRANSPORT), 33/35 St. Mary Axe, London, E.C.3. Tel.: AVEnue 2525 (15 lines).

JOHN FOTHERGILL at The Three Swans, Market Harborough, half-way between London and Manchester, and the East and West coasts, offers comfort, charm and good or uncommon food at all hours.

BOURNEMOUTH. Guests received. Well-appointed private house, sunny and quiet; h. & c. all bedrooms; good cooking; 100 yards from sea. 3½ guineas weekly or terms for apartments. MACGREGOR, 36 Pinecliffe Avenue, West Southbourne, Bournemouth.

MENDIPS, Anglo-French family take guests, 17th-Cent. Farm, h. & c. w. bedrooms, electricity, books, comfort, good cooking, lovely district. From 45*s.* WYNDHAMS', Shepton Mallet, Som. 'Phone 57.

BEAUTIFUL BUTTERMERE. National Trust's great Lakeland purchase. No restrictions. VICTORIA HOTEL, A.A. H. & C. Electricity. Swiss balconies. Unique grounds. Tel.: Buttermere 2.

OXFORD. THE CASTLE HOTEL for comfort and service. 1 min. stations, 4 mins. Carfax. You will stay often.

CORNWALL, 1m. from Polperro, guest-house in lovely garden on cliffs. Cooking definitely distinguished, based on home-grown produce. H. & c. all bedrooms; all comforts of first-class hotel without its formality. Write Westcliff, Talland, Looe, or make a shilling call Polperro 43.

EASTBOURNE. Mona House, Compton Street. Small comfortable private hotel, two mins. sea, Devonshire Park. Excellent cuisine, service. Inclusive terms. MATTHEWS. 'Phone 2597.

DARTMOOR. Overlooking Moors and close to famous Lydford Gorge. Board Residence with private sitting-rooms. Baths, indoor sanitation. Own dairy. Terms very moderate. CASTLE INN, Lydford, Devon.

GENTLEMAN farmer, university man, is prepared to take charge of one or two boys during school holidays. Delightful old farm house, with modern conveniences, etc., private road, riding, hunting, and a real home life. Box 862, N.S. & N., 10 Gt. Turnstile, London, W.C.1.

HOLIDAY. Exceptionally attractive and cheap, near Locarno (1,000 metres) highly cultured and musical circle. 10*s.* per day; French, Italian and German. Address: LA BARCA, Comologno, Val Ousernone, Switzerland.

MIEDERS, STUBAI VALLEY, TYROL, AUSTRIA. 3,200ft. up. 10 m. Innsbruck. Beautiful Alpine scenery. Fishing. Excellent cuisine. Terms 7*s.* 10 8*s.* HERR BECK, Hotel Lerchenhof.

SOVIET RUSSIA. Limited number of places available for special F.S.U. Tour to U.S.S.R., leaving London July 31st. Also bookings all the year round. Write for details F.S.U. TOURS DEPT., Friendship House, Little James Street, W.C.1.

INDEPENDENT CAMPING HOLIDAYS. 2,000 camp sites in Great Britain and Ireland. Tours to Germany, Switzerland, Pyrenees, Austria, Czechoslovakia, Roumania. Advice and information on every aspect of Camping and Caravanning. Equipment at reduced prices. Social activities. Canoe, Caravan and Mountaineering Sections. Literature free. SECRETARY, Camping Club of Great Britain and Ireland, 38 Grosvenor Gardens, London, S.W.1. Sloane 5866.

BRITTANY, South Coast; home comforts. Guests received in modernised private house; 50 acres grounds; on sea. Bathing, fishing, boating, sailing. Tennis clubs and picturesque fishing harbour near. Excellent tourist centre. Car. From 55 *frs.* per day. MME. CHAUVET, Stang Bihan, en Beuzec Conq. Finistere.

NEUSTIFT, last village in Stubaital, Tirol; Innsbruck 30 km.; fine walking; starting-point for famous climbing-huts; low season pension, 9 *sch.* inclusive; high 9–12. Baedeker stars this House. AUMAYR, Hotel Hofer.

RIVIERA, HOTEL DE LA MER, Cap Martin. Facing full south in own grounds direct on Sea. Buses to Menton and Monte Carlo. Pension 8*s.*

DENMARK. If you are visiting Copenhagen, a reader thoroughly recommends the TURIST HOTEL.

IN A RIVIERA VALLEY, a country house with sunny, sheltered terrace and gardens leading to the sea, you will find absolute quiet, modern comforts. Pension: Winter, 35 fr.; Summer, 50 fr. LES PALMERAIES DE VALMER, LA CROIX, VAR, FRANCE.

PARIS. 2 rms., bed, breakfast, 22 *frs.* a day, with French family in pleasant suburb, 10 mins. by train from Exposition. Write: MME. HAMON, 11bis, rue des Galons, Meudon, S. & O., or 'phone HOUnslow 0919.

astonishing performance for a boy of eighteen, full of fire and with a lovely Mozartian second subject to offset some pseudo-classical writing and a certain difficulty in reconciling the programme with the demands of form.

There are two concertos, Bach for violin in *A minor*, played by Menuhin and orchestra under Enesco (H.M.V. 4), and Mozart for piano in *F major* (*K.* 459), played by Schnabel and the L.S.O. (H.M.V. 7). There is a rival version of the Bach by Huberman and the Vienna Phil., but the orchestra there sounds too big for the work, and Huberman's fiddling a shade too impulsive and rhapsodical. Menuhin is at his best in Bach, and it will not be easy to surpass this set, though it must be admitted that an unusually slow tempo makes the last movement sound a bit lumpy. The Mozart is a work of sunny charm, one of the best of those which do not probe very deep. This is virtually a first recording and can be cordially recommended. There is much to admire in the playing, especially the deft and sparkling finale, but neither pianist nor conductor seems an ideal choice for Mozart in this mood. The slow movement is decidedly heavy-handed, and the first suffers a little from those sudden rushes that are so characteristic of Schnabel's playing; when he has a bar or two unaccompanied (in this concerto) he nearly always hurries the time, and he makes his first entry about half a beat too soon. Anybody who believes Schnabel's rhythm to be impeccable can satisfy himself of this with a metronome. Of course I do not mean that Mozart should be played with metronomic rigidity; but the disquieting feature of these Schnabel *accelerandi* is that one feels them to be not deliberate but accidental, like an over-keen athlete getting away a fraction of a second before the gun.

A few of the Coronation recordings (H.M.V.) have been sent to me, and of No. 5, which contains Handel's great anthem *Zadok the Priest*, it may safely be said that the whole thing was worth while for this record alone. The performance is inspired, and the effect on a big gramophone tremendous. The full vocal version of the *Prince Igor* Dances is sung in Russian on 4 Parlophone sides; these are more authentic and evocative than Beecham's Leeds Festival records, but less beautiful in tone: the solo girl would, I fear, offend even Polovtsian standards of *bel canto*. Claudia Muzio (Col.) is intelligent in "Pace, mio Dio" from Verdi's *Forza del Destino*, but inadequate in Bellini's "Casta Diva"; both arias have been better done by Ponselle. Schumann (H.M.V.) sings a charming "Wiegenlied" from Smetana's *Kuss*, with a *Solveig's Song* which sounds awkward in German. Flagstad (H.M.V.) spreads herself in two of her Scandinavian recital numbers—rather undistinguished songs by Grieg and Alnaes. It is time this singer gave us some of the great Schubert songs. What about *Die Allmacht* to begin with? Finally, the Comedy Harmonists (H.M.V.) provide a vocal version of the Overture to the *Barber of Seville* which, in the right mood and company, will seem exceedingly funny. DESMOND SHAWE-TAYLOR

Week-end Competitions

No. 382

Set by Allan M. Laing

The usual prizes (Two Guineas and Half a Guinea) are offered for the best comments, in not more than 200 words, of the undermentioned fictional characters on their respective creators:

Bertie Wooster on P. G. Wodehouse; Father Brown on G. K. C.; Mr. Polly on H. G. Wells; Jesse Oakroyd on J. B. Priestley; Lord Peter Wimsey on Dorothy Sayers; Alfred Doolittle on Bernard Shaw; John Shand on Sir James Barrie; Mr. Prohack on Arnold Bennett; One of the Children from "The Bad Child's Book of Beats" on Hilaire Belloc; the Duke of Dorset on Max Beerbohm; Marlow on Joseph Conrad; or, Colonel Blimp on Low.

Only one comment by one character is asked for from each entrant.

RULES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Friday, July 16.

2. Competitors may use a pseudonym. Typescript is not insisted on, but writing must be on one side of the paper only.

3. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves the right to print in part or as a whole any matter sent in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. cannot be returned. When no entries reach the required standard no prize will be awarded.

4. No competitor is eligible for more than one prize in any one week.

The result of the last week's competition will be announced in our next issue.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 380

Set by Desmond Shawe-Taylor

The usual prizes (Two Guineas and Half a Guinea) are offered for an extract of not more than 300 words from a letter home, containing the most completely uninteresting description of *either* (*a*) a visit to Chartres, *or* (*b*) an interview with Herr Hitler, *or* (*c*) an ascent of the Matterhorn, *or* (*d*) a gala performance at La Scala, Milan. Flatness rather than dryness should be aimed at.

Report by Desmond Shawe-Taylor

Readers of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION have no doubt of their ability to write a dull letter. Since many of the 80 or so entries surmounted the old problem—how to present bores without becoming a bore oneself—I spent a hilarious week-end. Mountaineers were fewest and least successful: even Pibwob's pompous pedantries were a little overdone. Several opera-goers quite properly omitted even the name of the opera which they had seen at Milan. They went for varied reasons: Anthony Butts because "we had seen no opera since we went to *Les Cloches de Corneville* at Ventnor in 1913," Petronella because "we agreed that it would have been *wicked* to leave Italy without seeing an opera." L. M. wondered about clothes: "Sybil wore her old green dress. Lucky I packed the silver grey; but my red V (it's been terribly hot all the time) looked rather awful"; but found time to note that "the music was by Verdi (you remember Amy's record 'Funicular Funicular'?)" and to criticise the audience: "the women of course all had dark actressy faces, rather fast and cruel I thought, and snobby too."

Hitler drew the largest entry, and in spite of some too obvious political satire there were many successes. The Führer's remarkable resemblance to his photographs was the subject of much comment, none happier than A. K.'s: "I felt as if I'd seen him before, which, of course, I had in pictures. His face looks much the same as the pictures with the moustache and the hair and of course his uniform. Only it was so much more real meeting him in the flesh and hearing him speak as if he were an ordinary human being, which of course he is in one sense." J. C. B. Date "asked him which side he supported in Spain," and Brenda Pool recited to him "the first six lines of 'Roslein auf der heiden,' which your Aunt Madge taught me as a child." Richard Pomfret is highly commended for authenticity of style, but has no plums for quotation.

Chartres nearly rivalled Hitler in number of entries and maintained a higher level. Mrs. Vardles opened brilliantly with: "It is difficult to find anything to tell you about Chartres. It is all very much alike. . . ." and Gundreda concluded with her "usual vain hunt for a clean Ladies!" Many people were annoyed that "the towers did not match," and E. J. Rendle found the "figures in the porches . . . distorted and rather chipped." J. L. Nevinson (a beautiful entry) voices the eternal difficulties of the sightseer: "The guide took us down first into the underneath part which was built first, and he pointed out a lot of interesting things which we could hardly see as it was very dark. . . . There was also a row of carvings with a great many figures in each, very interesting to those who know anything about carvings." Jane Lidderdale "liked the inside better than the out and so did Ernest, but he stubbed his toe on a cobble and so we went back to the station and had some thé." Mary Thomas, churchgoer rather than sightseer, has a brief way with aesthetics: "We attended the Cathedral on Sunday, quite a big building, though old-fashioned, with a number of statues. It seemed stuffy. . . ." John Keating has a realistic opening: "We were a bit sick of the Watsons, and so we went to a little tea shop instead of the hotel"; and a pleasant close: "Mr. Harrison told me it was originally intended to have *nine* spires! Fancy if they were *all* different!"

I recommend that the First Prize should be divided between Miss Macpherson and A. B., whose accounts of Chartres are without a false note. Second Prize goes to Harry Broadbent, whose crazy Hitler made me laugh so much as to banish some misgivings about its tone.

FIRST PRIZE

. . . We left Rouen at 1.30 and went by train to Chartres. The train was very full and one of us had to stand till we got to a station where several people got out. We got to Chartres about 8.15, there were no porters at the station and we had to wait some time for the Hôtel du Grand Monarque bus so we did not get to the hotel till about 9 and had dinner at once.

The next morning we walked round the town and went to a post office and sent a wire to mother. We looked at the Cathedral which has some very pretty glass. In the afternoon we walked about the town, but we did not find a very nice part. We came back by tram and had tea at a tea shop.

The electric light went out twice during the evening, once when we were dressing for dinner for about half an hour, and another time for about quarter of an hour when we were at dinner. Fortunately Father

had brought his electric torch down so we ate by the light of his torch till candles came, and then the electric light came on again.

We left Chartres the next morning for Tours. . . .

SUZANNE MACPHERSON

Dear Aunt Emma,

We are still enjoying a pleasant holiday. We left Paris and went to spend a day at Chartres as we were told there was a Cathedral there. Well, there is and we saw some glass windows and also some statues. We were told the North aspect was good but we were not quite sure which it was and it was nearly tea-time. We had tea, *quite near* the Cathedral and then looked around for a while but there is nothing much you know.

So lovely to see you soon again. Yours affectionately,

A. B.

SECOND PRIZE

I had tea with Hitler the other day he mustnt be very well or perhaps he doesnt like English tea any way he ate nothing at all not even the eclairs. So I said are you ill he said no and I said then you must be worrying about the Leipzig incident poor man he said whats that I said a battleship he said what about it and I didnt know what to say what with official secrets but I said well the one the Reds in Spain tried to torpedo the dirty hounds though I didnt think that really. What he said I thought Gil Robles had put down the Reds in Spain years ago oh no I replied theyve been fighting again for a year now oh yes I remember now Goering told me yesterday said the Fuehrer damn the man he scarcely tells me anything, well the people who own the battleship will be pretty sick. Why I said its yours didnt you know I thought he was going to explode he stamped about the room there was a red carpet on the floor he shouted Damn the Man Damn the Man I said who he said Goering I said why he said he never tells me a damn thing. I said well its in all the papers he said Hell I never read them they dont seem to be as good as they were to Hell with those journalists. So I kept quiet he seemed a bit worked up I should be too and he went to one of the men with fixed bayonets at the door and he clouted him on the ear. Then he calmed down so I said Heil Hitler he said Heil Hitler and I came away. HARRY BROADBENT

CALIBAN'S PROBLEM CONTEST

PROBLEM 236.—MR. GAMBITT'S TOURNAMENT

By J. N. T. Clissold

"At the rate we're going on," said Mr. Gambitt, "our annual tournament will one day involve 200 games."

"I thought you'd reached that total already."

"Not yet. You see, each competitor only plays two games—one with the white pieces and one with the black—against each other player in his class."

"In his class?" said I. "Why, how many classes are there then? I thought everyone played everyone else."

"Oh, no," said Mr. Gambitt, "there are two classes. Each competitor can enter in the first or second class, whichever he prefers."

I pondered. "And what was that you were saying about the number of games?"

"Oh," said Mr. Gambitt, "only that one day it will reach 200. It's going up annually. For the last four years the total number of games played has each year shown an increase of two games on the number played the year before."

"And yet I didn't think there were so many competitors this year?"

"Well, there weren't so many as last year. The second class has fallen off, you see."

How many competed this year in the first class?

PROBLEM 234.—THE BUNMOW FLITCH

The solution is held over till next week as Caliban is out of town.

PROBLEM 233.—THE BLIMP BOOK CLUB

A set of Low's Cartoons goes to Sydney Thompson, 3 Hambleton Road, Harrogate. *Four* points are awarded.

PRIZES FOR PROBLEM SOLVERS

A set of Low's cartoons is awarded to the sender of a correct solution selected at random.

In addition, a record is kept of correct solutions sent, and of the points scored weekly by solvers. On attaining 100 points a solver is entitled to a prize consisting of any book (or books) reviewed or advertised in these columns, of a value not greater than 10s. Solvers who have won a prize on this basis are eligible for a second prize on attaining a further 120 points, and for a third prize on attaining a further 150. Solutions must be addressed to CALIBAN, c/o the Editor, and must reach this office not later than Tuesday week following publication of the problem. Solutions to two problems may be sent in one envelope, but on separate sheets of paper.

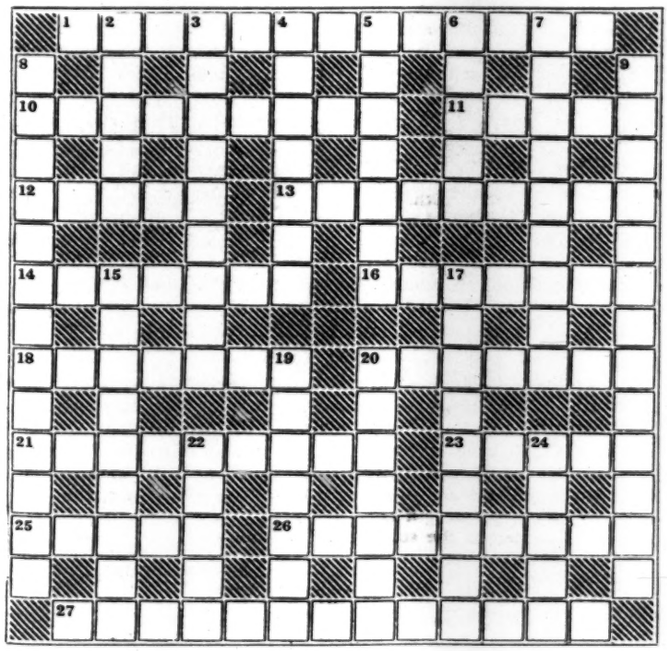
Some indication should be given of the method of solution.

[U.S.A. Competitors. The Editor regrets that the prizes offered in our Week-end Competitions cannot apply to American competitors.]

CALIBAN

WEEK-END CROSSWORD 383

Books to the value of Five Shillings may be chosen by the sender of the first correct solution opened. Post solutions to arrive not later than first delivery Wednesday following the date of issue, addressed to "CROSSWORDS," 10 Great Turnstile, London, W.C.1.



Set by L.-S.

The last week's winner is

Mrs. E. G. Harvey, 10, Brook Lodge, Brent Bridge, N.W.11.

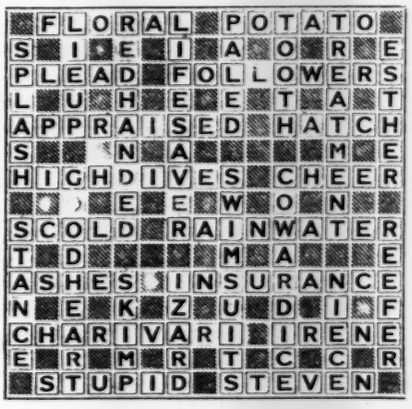
ACROSS.

1. Filmy description of the Louvre, for instance.
10. Where sleepers are tracked down as it were.
11. A double knock in the American billiards room.
12. 13 is no less.
13. Exorbitant demands of those at the base during battles.
14. A loud bunny gets peevish.
16. Limb that was not amputated?
18. They should be tucked in, of course, for schoolboys.
20. A rebuilt postern.
21. They dig together.
23. Assumed an attitude in reverse.
25. The wooded part of one's garden.
26. Formation commanded in the King's Name.
27. When the family expects a comedown.

DOWN.

2. Her constitution hasn't yet suffered from overwork.
3. Takes the engine a roundabout way.
4. Mine art is seen in my clothing.
5. A small revelation in a bucket.
6. Let the account be put in.
7. Bird that takes a torn 11.
8. Government by the way?
9. Is this where motorists leave their cars to go roundabout?
15. Military precedence.
17. Service-able footwear.
19. Wimbledon competitions cancelled?
20. 6.3 points of the law.
22. This man I adore takes it to heart.
24. Stonecrop growing in a disused umbrella.

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD



THE WEEK IN THE CITY

By DIVES

THE MARKETS—M. BONNET'S FRANC—WHEAT FLUCTUATIONS—SHIPPING SHARES

THE doves from City arks returned this week with fresh green evidence that the waters of depression had somewhat subsided. Their olive leaves were brand new buying orders, and the appearance of them entirely changed the tone of the Stock Exchange. Both the London and New York stock markets have lately shown signs of being "sold out." Equity shares in London have been declining since January, in New York since March. British industrial shares had got back to their levels of June, 1936; American to their levels of August, 1936. I need not rehearse all the reasons for the decline; it will suffice to say that the American labour crisis, the French financial crisis and the recurrent Spanish "non-intervention" crisis, had lately combined to bring both markets to a state of exaggerated bearishness and "wind." Liquidation of the forced variety, however, had stopped; it only needed the appearance of a little new buying to bring about a vigorous technical rally. Why the new buying should come about this week may seem strange to the layman, but Throgmorton Street appears to have decided that the Spanish crisis does not mean war, and Wall Street that the worst of the industrial strikes has been seen. And each market has had its constructive piece of news to tempt the "bulls" out of their hiding. In London the increase of the Exchange Equalisation Fund by £200 millions proved that the British Government had determined to go on buying gold at 140s. per ounce and did not regard the present level of commodity prices as too high. This finally scotched the gold scare and encouraged the commodity markets. In New York the new issue market was revived by the successful placing of over $200 millions of company stocks, including $70 millions of industrial preferred issues now selling at satisfactory premiums. In other words, the long "stay-out" strike on the part of the institutional American investor is breaking down. It only remains to be added that the trade news was encouraging for a stock market recovery. America is looking forward to the largest crops for many years, and Great Britain is experiencing a further decline in unemployment. Nevertheless, I prefer to call the immediate stock market recovery, if it develops, a technical rally. London cannot long forget the political tensions in Europe or the instability of France, while New York has to reckon with new legislation before Congress rises—the most important being a Supreme Court Reform Bill and a new Income Tax Bill. The last may have an unpleasant surprise for the foreign investor. I doubt, therefore, whether the rally can yet go very far.

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M. Bonnet is entitled to congratulate himself: his initial currency operation has been carried out with no serious disturbance or "sensations." When dealings in francs were resumed, the rate against the pound sterling rose almost immediately to 130. At this point a number of "bear" positions in francs were closed; and, though there are no signs yet of any substantial repatriation of French "flight" capital from abroad, repurchases of francs by the "bears," who have netted handsome profits, were sufficient to check the depreciation. By Wednesday of this week the rate had reacted to 128 $\frac{5}{16}$, and the recovery would have gone farther but for intervention in the market by the French "control." In order to begin rebuilding its vanished reserves of gold and foreign exchange, the Exchequer Equalisation Account—now managed, it would appear, solely by M. Rueff since the resignation of MM. Rist and Baudouin—met all demands for francs from its own franc resources. A small but useful reserve has already been re-created by these means. There has been talk of an Anglo-American banking credit on a grandiose scale. This is probably premature. Though there is little doubt that the authorities in London and Washington would be willing to assist the Bank of France at need, the occasion for assistance has not yet arisen. The testing time for the Bonnet franc will come when the fruits of the new tax programme can be measured, and events have shown what proportion of the £1,000 millions of French balances held abroad can be attracted home by a Government which, despite its reconstruction, is still well to the Left of the Centre.

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The international wheat market's recent movements are a natural reflection of the fact that the world's reserves of wheat are so narrow that day-to-day reports of crop conditions exercise a violent effect on prices. October "futures" have lately been jumping up and down by several pence per cental in a single day, and are now quoted in Liverpool at fractionally under 9*s*. 5*d*., as compared with about 8*s*. 9*d*. a month ago. It is now clear that during the current cereal year, which ends in three weeks' time, the wheat-importing countries will have absorbed nearly 600 million bushels, leaving the carry-over in exporting countries too small to permit safely much further diminution. Crops in Europe are moderate; but with Germany and Italy both intent on having ample war-reserves of wheat, it would be unsafe to put importing countries' 1937–38 requirements at much less than 580 million bushels. Where are these supplies to come from? The Canadian crop has suffered from drought in Saskatchewan, and indications are that the export surplus is unlikely to exceed half last year's shipments of about 220 million bushels. Until recently the prospective export surplus of the U.S.A. was somewhat optimistically estimated by the market at 100–125 million bushels. There are now, however, reports of considerable rust damage, and it looks as if the lower figure will be the very best that can be obtained. Add, say, 100 million bushels of Danube and Russian wheat which may be available; there remains a gap of at least 275 million quarters which must be filled by Southern Hemisphere exports. If Australia and the Argentine both have bumper crops, the shortage can doubtless be overcome without difficulty. Otherwise we shall have to rely on the contraction of marginal demand as a result of high bread prices—a poor solution. In any event, from the investor's standpoint, the U.S. farmer is probably going to enjoy a more profitable summer than he has had for years—a bull point for farm implement stocks like International Harvester and, indirectly, for the large mail order merchandising concerns—e.g., Sears Roebuck and Montgomery Ward.

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A new development in the shipyards is increasing the speculative interest in shipping shares. Building costs have risen so rapidly, not to mention the delays in making delivery, that some shipowners have cancelled their orders for new tonnage. The Admiralty naturally takes precedence in the national yards, and if the shipowner cannot feel certain that he will obtain delivery of a new

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vessel under two years he will not be so keen to build. Cargo space may, therefore, continue to be in short supply for some time to come and tramp freight rates may continue to hold their extraordinary rise. So far this year the index of tramp freight rates has averaged over 135 (1929=100) as against 90.8 for 1936. The rise since June last year is shown in the following table:

June, 1936	82.7	Jan., 1937	131.2
Sept., 1936	97.6	Mar., 1937	132.3
Dec., 1936	127.5	May, 1937	144.9

Among the tramp shipping shares I like Court Line, King Line and France Fenwick, particulars of which are set out in the next table:

	% Earned.		% Paid.		Price.	Estimated Yields. On Earnings.	On Divs.
	1936	1937 Estd.	1936	1937 Estd.			
Court Line, 6/8 shares	6.1	48.0	—	15	19/-	16.8%	5.26%
King Line, £1 shares	6.6	32.0	—	8	26/3	24.4%	6.09%
France Fenwick, £1 shares	9.9	20.0	5.0	8.0	28/-	14.3%	5.72%

These companies are small. Court has an ordinary share capital of £525,000, King of £500,000, and France Fenwick of £750,000. The tonnage owned is 220,000 tons for Court, 130,000 tons for King, and 40,000 tons for France Fenwick. The last is the only "investment" share. France Fenwick operates a fleet of colliers between the North-East Coast and London and the Continent, and has a good dividend record. The other two shares are much more speculative and more restricted market-wise. If the investor prefers the freer markets he must go to the cargo-liners—to Furness Withy, P. and O., and Royal Mail Lines. But he will not find the shares cheaper. In fact, the market in these "popular" shares has probably discounted fully the 1937 improvement in earnings. The £1 ordinary shares of Clan Line, whose fleet consists entirely of cargo boats, are quoted at £9 to yield 8½% on the earnings and only 2.2% on the dividends of 1936. The upward trend of shipping earnings will probably continue but the leading shipping shares cannot be regarded as cheap.

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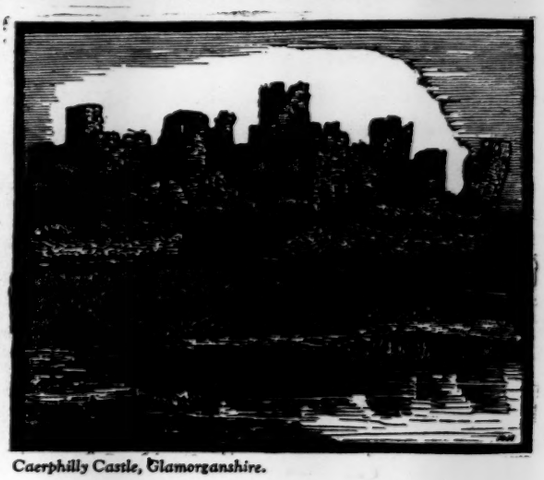

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